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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to assist individual bilingual vocational training projects improve their approach to program evaluation. The guide presents an overall framework to be used by local project staff and evaluators to establish the scope of evaluation and give direction in meeting local evaluation needs. The guide does not provide a "cookbook" approach to evaluation, but rather gives direction for planning, suggests evaluation questions around which to structure a local evaluation, provides sample data-collection instruments for use at various project stages, and gives specific guidance for carrying out critical data-collection activities. Chapters address the following aspects of the evaluation: process and plans, evaluation framework, program environment, program participants, program outcomes, and presentation of findings. Appended materials include: a statistical summary report form for reported data to the federal government; information on the format, content, and administration of the Basic English Skills Test; and a review of language proficiency tests. (MSE)

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EVALUATION GUIDE FOR BILINGUAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

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EVALUATION GUIDE FOR BILINGUAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

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FOREWORD

The general purpose of bilingual vocational training (BVT) is to provide vocational training and other employment-related services (including English-language instruction) to limited English proficient (LEP) adults. While some BVT projects have been able to document the extent of their success, others have not focused on program evaluation as an important priority. Since evaluation results can be extremely helpful for improving program planning, implementation, and management, this Guidebook has been prepared to help project directors and evaluators with guidelines for evaluating their local projects.

Program evaluation can be a important tool for project managers. It can be used to assess whether a project is being implemented as planned, and to assess the extent to which stated goals and objectives are being achieved. Thus, evaluation data provide the basis for planning and decision-making relative to program improvement.

In addition to being extremely useful for local project improvement, evaluation results are important for program improvement and policy-making at federal and state agencies. However, to be maximally useful at those levels, data must be standardized so that they can be aggregated across local projects. Therefore, a reporting form has been developed for collecting consistent program, participant, and impact data. This report is discussed in Appendix A and directions for documenting English language proficiency in the report are discussed in Appendix B.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The BVT Model

Bilingual vocational training (BVT) is a program designed to assist limited English proficient (LEP) adults in need of job skills, employment and related English language proficiency. In addition to having communication difficulties associated with a lack of English language skills, LEP adults are generally unemployed or underemployed, and have substantial needs for job counseling and placement. A BVT program uses the native language of the trainee for developing vocational skills and teaching related vocational subject matter, while developing the trainee's ability to use and understand English needed for the job.

More specifically, the "BVT Model" is composed of the following activities:

1. Recruitment:	activities designed to specifically attract LEP adults;
2. Intake and Assessment:	activities for gathering information from participants to describe their general characteristics, vocational interests and aptitudes, and English language proficiency;
3. Bilingual Vocational Instruction:	instruction which uses a combination of English and the trainees' native language to teach vocational skills;
4. Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL):	instruction that focuses on job-specific and employment-related English;
5. Counseling and Support Services:	individual assistance in employment, and related adjustment problems;
6. Job Development and Placement:	outreach with local employers to place program participants in wage-earning jobs after training; and
7. Coordination:	activities to link the other six components so that they mutually support each other.

BVT programs have four fundamental goals:

- Stable employment for limited-English proficient (LEP) adults;
- Increased job-related English language proficiency for LEP adults;
- Increased earning capability for LEP adults; and
- Greater career advancement opportunities for LEP adults.

The evaluation strategy presented in this guidebook is directed at assessing the extent to which these goals have been achieved.

B. Purposes of This Evaluation Guide

The overall goal of this Guide is to help individual projects improve their approach to program evaluation. At the local project level, there is a need to obtain more comprehensive data in order to assess effectiveness and improve program planning and management. The Guide presents an overall framework which can be used by local BVT project staff and evaluators to help establish the scope of their evaluations and to give direction to projects in meeting local evaluation needs. There is also a need for standardized data which can be aggregated across a group of projects to present an overall picture of a State or Federal funding program. The standardized data can then be used for planning, policy, and management purposes. The BVT Statistical Summary Report (Appendix A) provides a mechanism for this latter purpose.

What the Guide Is Not Intended to Accomplish?

In order to be as clear as possible about the purposes and intended uses of this Guide, a word is in order about **what it is not intended to do** for the various users. It is not intended to be a "textbook" about evaluation in general, nor about evaluation of vocational programs in particular.

Specifically, it is not intended to:

- be a "cookbook" for evaluating local programs with specific recipes and menus for each aspect of an evaluation;
- be considered a lock-step methodology with a compendium of precise instruments for examining all of the activities and services of the BVT Model; nor
- be a limiting or restrictive directive on what should or should not be evaluated in each local program.

Since the features and needs of different projects vary greatly, specific measures and procedures for assessing vocational skills are not goals of this Guide. Each program may adapt the materials in this Guide to its own needs.

What the Guide Is Intended to Do

In the broadest sense, the Guide will provide guidance and assist local programs to design and carry out their local evaluations. Thus, the Guide is intended to:

- provide direction for planning a relevant evaluation which meets the unique needs of each local program;
- provide a compendium of evaluation questions around which a local evaluation can be structured;
- provide sample instruments for collecting data at program intake, at program completion, and at follow-up periods after job placement; and
- provide specific guidance for carrying out critical data collection activities, such as measuring English proficiency and collecting follow-up data from former participants and from employers.

C. Audiences

The primary audience for this Guide consists of local BVT project directors, staff, and evaluators. Others who may profit from using the Guide are state program administrators and coordinators who wish to know more about the impact of local programs across their States. State special needs coordinators and state vocational education directors can use the Guide for evaluating their local projects.

Another group which can use this Guide includes the Federal BVE Program staff and other officials interested in national level data concerning the impact of vocational training for LEP adults. The BVT Statistical Summary Report (see Appendix A) can be used to create a national data base concerning the effects of participation in BVT programs. The results can be used to plan future programs, set program policy, allocate resources, promote the program nationally, and manage/monitor the programs in general.

In summary, this document is called a Guide for deliberate reasons. The local program staff and evaluator will be able to use the framework, the evaluation questions, sample instruments, and information on English language proficiency measurement, follow-up procedures, and other aspects of data collection to fit the needs and issues which concern their local program. The listing of evaluation questions and the sample instruments presented in this document are not intended to be limiting by any means. They provide a starting point to facilitate the process of formulating evaluation questions and focusing the evaluation.

* * *

The next chapter of this Guide presents a six-step evaluation process. This process is general in nature and discusses how an evaluation should be planned and conducted. Chapter III, on the other hand, sets forth a framework for specifically evaluating local BVT projects. This framework discusses what aspects of the BVT program should be included in the evaluation, what questions should be addressed, and what data should be collected. The general process described in Chapter II should be applied to the specific framework presented in Chapter III in order to plan and conduct a comprehensive evaluation. Chapter IV - VII of the Guide provide guidance in planning for each component of the evaluation framework, while Chapter VIII discusses how the data and the evaluation findings may be presented.

II. EVALUATION PROCESS AND PLANS

Evaluation is one of the basic tools for program management and improvement. The central questions to be answered include:

- To what extent have program objectives been met?
- What contributed to the successes and failures?
- What changes and improvements should be made?

Thus, evaluation provides information for documenting and improving program effectiveness.

The documentation of program effectiveness involves the systematic collection, analysis, and reporting of information or data. It should not be forgotten, however, that the improvement of program effectiveness involves human judgement, i.e., using the reported data for planning and decision-making which will result in program improvement and increased effectiveness.

A. Overview of the Evaluation Process

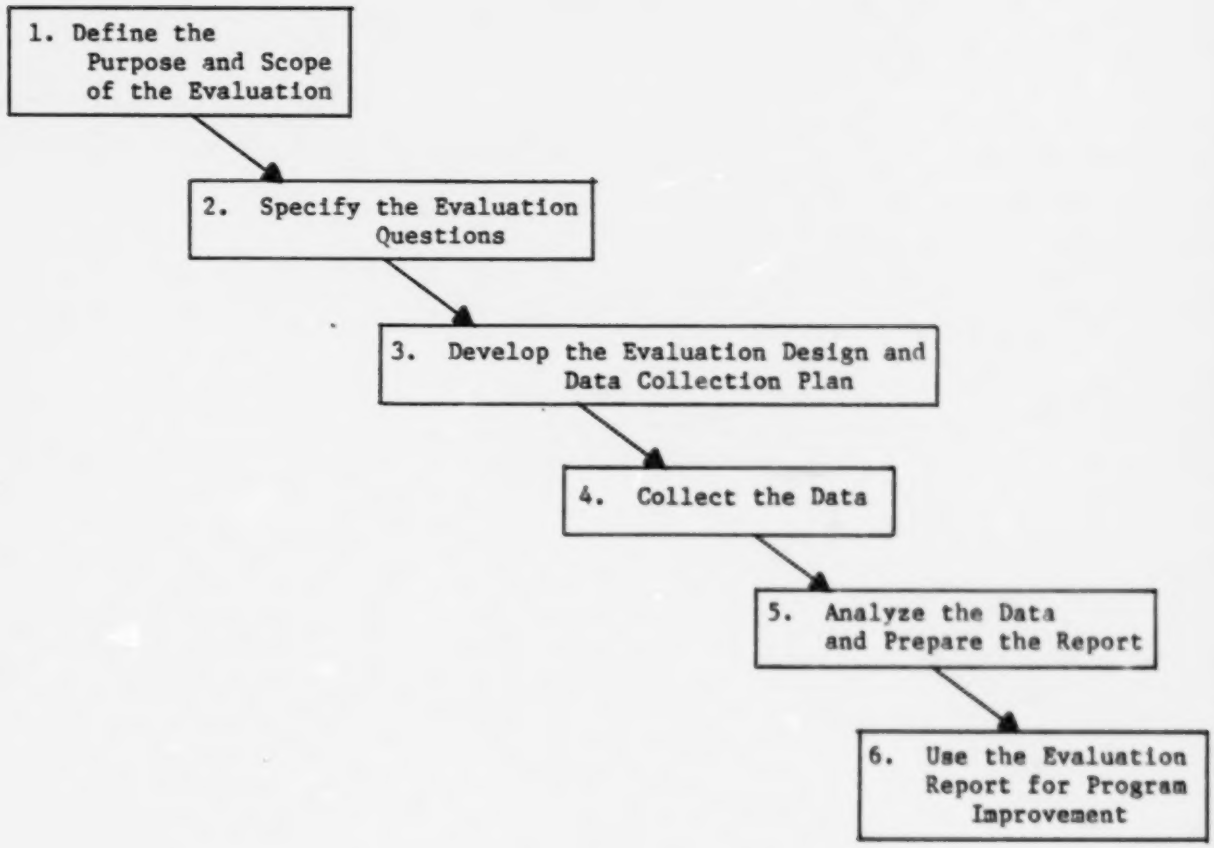
The evaluation process can be described as involving six progressive steps. These steps are shown in Exhibit 1, and are discussed below. It is important to remember that initiating an evaluation cannot wait until a program is nearing completion. An evaluation should be planned as part of the overall program and should be implemented at the same time the program begins operation. In this manner, program activities can be adequately documented from their beginning, and baseline data on program participants can be collected as they enter the program.

Step 1: Defining the Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The first step in planning an evaluation is to define its purpose and scope. This helps set the limits of the evaluation, confining it to a manageable size. Defining its purpose includes deciding on the goals and objectives for the evaluation, and on the audience who will use the evaluation results. The evaluation goals and objectives may vary depending on whether the program being evaluated is new and is going through a try-out period, or if a program has been thoroughly tested and needs documentation of its success before information about the program is widely disseminated and adoption by others encouraged.

EXHIBIT 1

STEPS IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS


1. Define the Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation
2. Specify the Evaluation Questions
3. Develop the Evaluation Design and Data Collection Plan
4. Collect the Data
5. Analyze the Data and Prepare the Report
6. Use the Evaluation Report for Program Improvement

Depending on the purpose, the audience for evaluation may be restricted to the project director and his/her staff, or may include a wider range of individuals, from agency administrators and decision-makers, to planners and other officials at the local, state, or federal level.

The scope of the evaluation depends on the evaluation's purpose and the information needs of its intended audience. These needs determine the specific components of a program which should be evaluated and on the specific project objectives which are to be addressed. If an evaluation of a program has recently been conducted, a limited evaluation may be designed to target on certain parts of the program which have been changed, revised, or modified. Similarly, the evaluation may be designed to focus on certain participant objectives which were shown to be only partially achieved in a previous evaluation. Thus, this step will define exactly which aspects of the program are to be evaluated. Costs and resources available to conduct the evaluation must also be considered in this decision.

Step 2: Specifying the Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions are general questions that grow out of the purpose and scope specified in the previous step. They help further define the limits of the evaluation. The evaluation questions are to be discussed and answered in the evaluation report and should be formulated to address the needs of the specific audience to whom the evaluation is directed. Evaluation questions should be developed for each component of the program which falls into the scope which was defined in the previous step. For example, questions may be formulated which concern the adequacy of the curriculum and the experience of the teaching staff; other questions may concern the appropriateness of the vocational skills being taught in relation to employment opportunities in the local community; additional questions may relate to the appropriateness of the individuals being recruited for the program with respect to their English language proficiency and employment status; and finally, evaluation questions may relate to the extent to which participants are achieving the goals of the program, such as stable employment and increased earning capability.

A good way to begin formulating evaluation questions is to carefully examine the project's objectives; another source of questions is to anticipate problem areas concerning program implementation. Importantly, the audience for or expected users of the evaluation should be involved in developing the evaluation questions. This should never be left solely to the outside evaluator, no matter how familiar he or she is with the program. Once the evaluation questions are developed, they should be prioritized and examined in relation to the time and resources available. Once this is accomplished, the final set of evaluation questions can be selected.

Step 3: Developing the Evaluation Design and Data Collection Plan

This step involves specifying the approach to answering the evaluation questions, including how the required data will be collected. This will involve:

- specifying the data sources for each evaluation question;
- specifying the types of data collection approaches and instruments needed;
- specifying the specific time periods for collecting the data;
- specifying the staff members who will be assigned to collecting the data, and how their data collection responsibilities relate to their other project responsibilities; and
- specifying the resources which will be required to carry out the evaluation.

The design and data collection plan is actually a roadmap for carrying out the evaluation. An important part of the design is the development or selection of the instruments for collecting and recording the data needed to answer the evaluation questions. Data collection instuments may vary from record-keeping forms, questionnaires, interview guides, to vocational and language skills tests. Some of the instrumentation may already be available, i.e., forms used for recordkeeping and management purposes, such as recruitment or intake forms, etc. Some of these forms will have to be modified to meet the evaluation needs. In other cases, new instruments will have to be created.

In designing the instruments, the relevance of the items to the evaluation questions and the ease or difficulty of obtaining the desired data should be considered. Thus, the instruments should be reviewed by the project director and staff members to ensure that the data can be obtained in a cost-effective manner and without causing major disruptions or inconveniences to the project.

Step 4: Collecting the Data

Data collection should follow the plans developed in the previous step. The individuals assigned to the various data collection tasks need to be thoroughly trained in the data collection requirements and procedures. Only by following standardized procedures will the data be reliable and valid. Following training, the project director needs to monitor the staff to ensure that they are accomplishing their data collection assignments according to the specified time schedule. The data should be recorded carefully and neatly so they can be read and interpreted during the analysis stage. Proper record-keeping and filing are similarly important so that the data are not lost or misplaced. Any problem should be discussed with the project director

and evaluator. Deviations from the data collection plan should be documented so that they can be considered in analyzing and interpreting the data.

Step 5: Analyzing the Data and Preparing a Report

This step involves tabulating, summarizing, and interpreting the collected data in such a way as to answer the evaluation questions. These procedures should be compatable with the type and amount of data which were collected, and the goals and objectives of the evaluation. Appropriate descriptive measures (frequency and percentage distributions, central tendency and variability, correlation, etc.) and inferential techniques (significance of difference between means and other statistics, analysis of variance, ch-square, etc.) should be used to analyze the data. The local evaluator should have responsibility for this aspect of the evaluation.

The evaluation will not be completed until a report has been written and the results communicated to the project director and other appropriate administrators and decision-makers. In preparing the report, the writers should be clear about the audience for whom the report is being prepared. Two broad questions need to be considered: (1) What does the the audience need to know about the evaluation results? and (2) How can these results be best presented? Different audiences need different levels of information. Administrators need general information for policy decision-making, while project staff may need more detailed information which focuses on project activities and effects on participants.

The report should cover the following:

- The goals of the evaluation;
- The procedures or methods used;
- The findings; and
- The implication of the findings including recommendations for changes or improvements in the program.

Importantly, the report should be organized so that it addresses all of the evaluation questions specified in Step 2.

Step 6: Using the Evaluation Report for Program Improvement

The evaluation should not be considered successful until its results are used by program managers and decision-makers for program improvement. After all, this is the ultimate reason for conducting the evaluation. The evaluation may indicate that a program activity is not being implemented according to plan, or it may indicate that a particular objective is not being met. If this does occur, it is then the responsibility of the project director to make appropriate changes to remedy the situation. Project directors should never be satisfied with their programs. Improvements can always be made, and evaluation is an important tool for accomplishing this purpose.

B. Planning the Evaluation

The evaluation should be conducted by an independent, experienced evaluator. This individual will provide the expertise for an evaluation which is comprehensive, objective, and technically sound. The project director and her/his staff must work closely with the evaluator beginning with the planning stage to ensure the evaluation meets the exact needs of the project.

Adequate time and thought for planning an evaluation is essential, and will give the project director and staff an opportunity to develop ideas about what they would like the evaluation to accomplish. The evaluation should address the goals specified in the project application and management plan. In some projects, however, one or more goals or objectives may require special attention. Some activities or instructional strategies may have been recently implemented, or the staff may be aware of some special problems which should be addressed. For example, there might have been a recent breakdown in communication between the ESL teachers and the vocational instructional staff; or the characteristics of the participants in recent training cycles might have begun to differ significantly from past groups, having implications for vocational training or the approach to language instruction. These are examples of things which should be considered when the project director selects an evaluator. The evaluator must then familiarize himself or herself with the special issues of concern on which the evaluation should focus.

Thus, the initial step of the evaluation process involves thinking about any special needs which will help in planning the overall evaluation and selecting the evaluator. Special evaluation questions and problems identified in the instructional staff area might suggest that an evaluator is needed who has expertise in evaluating instructional systems, etc. Similarly, if the project needs an evaluation which requires frequent on-site observation of teaching methodologies by the evaluator, then this will help the project director focus on hiring someone located nearby so that travel costs can be kept to a minimum.

In summary, defining the scope involves setting limits, identifying specific areas of inquiry and deciding on what parts of the program and on which objectives the evaluation will focus. The scope does not answer the question of how the evaluation will be conducted. In establishing the scope, one is actually determining which components or parts of the program will be evaluated. This step is important and, indeed, implies that the evaluation may not cover every aspect and activity of the program.

C. Selecting the Evaluator

Selecting an evaluator for the program is one of the most important elements in ensuring a technically sound and useful evaluation. The basic criteria suggested for selection are as follows:

- Skills in evaluation design, constructing data collection instruments, collecting data, managing and maintaining quality control over data collection, analyzing data, and writing reports;
- Experience in conducting evaluations of vocational training projects targeted at LEP adults;
- Knowledge of the BVT model;
- Experience in collecting data from employers and community and business groups;
- Ability and willingness to work directly with the project director in order to design the evaluation, oversee its implementation, and prepare a report;
- Reside within reasonable distance of the project so that travel costs are minimal and scheduling work sessions is not a problem; and
- Available for complete time period required for the project at a rate that fits the basic budget resources allocated to evaluation and the number of evaluator-days projected in the initial planning; the project might expect to plan for at least 20-25 work-days for the evaluator.

Once an individual has been selected and has agreed to become the local evaluator for the project, a contract and work plan must be developed so that expectations, roles, and responsibilities are clear to all parties.

D. Specifying the Roles of Project Director, Staff and Evaluator

In order for the evaluation to be planned and carried out effectively, the roles of the project director, staff, and evaluator must be made clear to all parties. The evaluator should be responsible for specifying the design and developing the data collection instruments, training project staff to collect the required data, analyzing the data, and preparing a comprehensive report. The project director should work with the evaluator in specifying the objectives and scope of the evaluation, and assigning and supervising the project staff in carrying out their assigned data collection and record-keeping tasks. The project staff should be assigned the major data collection and record-keeping tasks for the evaluation. This will increase their job responsibilities, but is the most cost-effective way of collecting the required data. More specifically, the suggested roles of the project director, the evaluator, and the project staff are listed below:

The project director will:

- recruit and hire an experienced evaluator;
- work with the evaluator to define the objectives and scope of the evaluation;
- work with the evaluator to define the evaluation questions which will be addressed;
- review and approve data collection instruments and procedures to ensure that they are compatible with project activities;
- assign and supervise project staff for data collection and recordkeeping;
- approve schedule and expenditures for the evaluation; and
- approve final evaluation report.

The evaluator will:

- work with the project director to define the purpose and scope of the evaluation;
- work with the project director to specify the evaluation questions which will be addressed;

- develop the evaluation design;
- develop data collection instruments and procedures, including the schedule and calendar for all data collection;
- train project staff to collect the required data;
- analyze the collected data to answer the evaluation questions; and
- prepare the evaluation report.

The project staff will:

- collect the evaluation data;
- maintain participant tracking records as well as conduct follow-up surveys of former trainees; and
- assist the evaluator in tabulating and summarizing the collected data.

E. Allocating Resources

Critical questions in planning the evaluation concern how much staff time and financial resources can be expended on the evaluation, and what resources are needed to actually carry it out. These two questions need to be addressed by the project director and the evaluator early in the design process. Many evaluators will raise these questions in the initial exploratory discussions concerning the evaluation. Preliminary planning will have to be accomplished before a final decision can be made on both the role and level of effort of the evaluator and each project staff member.

A variety of design decisions must be made during the planning stages that affect the allocation of both financial and staff resources. Each decision affects the staff/evaluator roles and functions, level of effort, and resources, and ultimately determines the overall scope of the evaluation. For instance, a record-keeping procedure must be developed to maintain accurate evaluation data. A tracking system is also needed to manage follow-up surveys of former trainees. These record-keeping and tracking systems, as well as the actual data collection activities, involve staff and material costs. These costs need to be considered in defining the final scope of the evaluation.

* * *

To summarize, this chapter presented a general process which focused on how an evaluation may be planned and carried out. The next chapter, and in fact the remainder of this Guide, dicusses what program components, evaluation questions, and data should be included in an evaluation of a local BVT project.

III. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

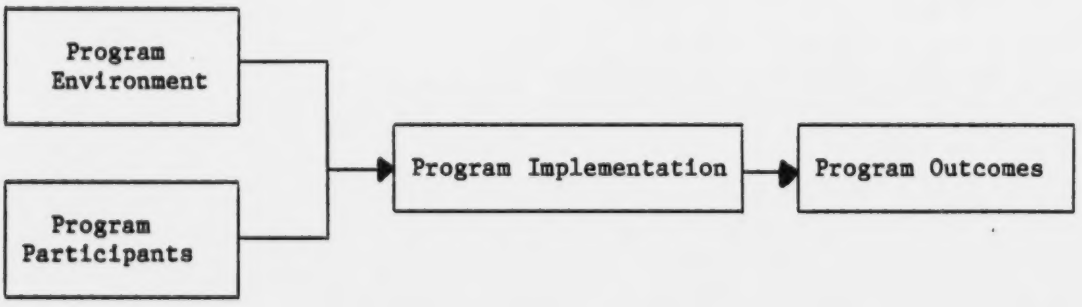
This chapter presents a framework for evaluating local BVT projects which combines outcome evaluation with process evaluation. An outcome evaluation attempts to determine the extent to which a project's specific objectives have been achieved. On the other hand, the process evaluation seeks to describe the program which was implemented, and through this, attempt to gain an understanding of why the objectives were or were not achieved.

Evaluators have been criticized in the past for focusing on outcome evaluation and excluding the process side, or focusing on process evaluation without examining outcomes. The framework presented here incorporates both the process and outcome side. In this manner, one can determine the effect (or outcome) of a program, and also understand how the program produced that effect and how the program might be modified to produce that effect more completely and efficiently.

In order to focus on both process and outcomes of a local BVT program, an evaluation should be designed in which evaluation questions, and data collection and analysis, address the following:

- Program Environment;
- Program Participants;
- Program Implementation; and
- Program Outcomes.

These components may be thought of as being linked in the following manner:



Using this framework, descriptions are prepared of the environment, the participants, and the program activities and services which are implemented. Outcomes of the program are also assessed. The description of the environment, participants, and activities and services are used to explain how the outcomes were achieved and to suggest changes which may produce these outcomes more effectively and efficiently.

Each evaluation component is described below.

Environment

This component defines the environment in which a BVT project is implemented. This includes the community in which the project is located, the economy of the community, the job opportunities in the community, and the characteristics and job training needs of the LEP adults who live in the community. Understanding the environment in which the project is located is important to assessing and interpreting the outcomes of the program, especially job placement, job retention, and job advancement. Data concerning this component are collected through a project needs assessment which should be completed prior to funding. The data are generally presented in the project grant application.

Participants

This component defines the characteristics of the participants, including English proficiency at program entry, previous vocational training, and work history. Data on the characteristics of participants may be collected as part of program recruitment and intake activities. In addition to their use for descriptive purposes, these data are useful for comparisions with similar data collected at completion of the training and at follow-up data collection periods.

Program Implementation

This component describes how the key activities of the program are implemented, including recruitment, intake and assessment; vocational and English language instruction; counseling and other support services; and job development and job

placement. In this manner, the outcomes or results achieved by the program can be attributed to what actually has taken place, rather than what was planned to occur. This component also addresses the questions of what services and activities of the program have been fully implemented, partially implemented, and not implemented.

Outcomes

This component concerns the effects that the program has on its participants, and to what extent the program has met its stated objectives for program participants. Data concerning these objectives should be collected at program completion and at specific times following the initial job placement of each completer.

At program completion, data should be collected on rates of program completion, achievement of vocational and English language instructional objectives and competencies, vocational skills and knowledge, English language proficiency, placement in a job, wages per hour, hours worked per week, and satisfaction with the training received.

At both 90 and 180-days following initial job placement after training, data should be collected on employment rates of former participants, wages per hour, number of hours worked per week, number receiving job promotions, number receiving wage increases, ratings of job satisfaction, and ratings of employer satisfaction with the vocational and English language skills of employees who had completed the BVT program.

Using the above four evaluation components, a comprehensive assessment of a BVT program may be designed. Not only will this evaluation approach allow the project staff to determine the extent to which project goals and objectives are met, but will also enable them to understand how those outcomes were achieved and to make changes for program improvement purposes in the future.

* * *

The evaluation framework presented above should be implemented using the six-step process described in Chapter II. The framework describes what should be included in the evaluation; the six-step process describes how the evaluation is to be planned and carried out. Guidelines for defining the scope of the evaluation, specifying evaluation questions, and developing the data collection plans for each of the four evaluation components are discussed in the following chapters.

IV. PROGRAM ENVIRONMENT

This chapter focuses on obtaining descriptive information concerning the economic and employment environment of the community in which the project is located. Thus, it provides a context against which job placement, wages, and other outcomes may be measured.

Information on the economic and employment characteristics will most often be collected as part of a needs assessment which is generally conducted prior to planning a project. In fact, the needs assessment results are often part of the project's grant proposal or application. Thus, no new data may be required; the needs assessment data may satisfy the requirements of the evaluation.

In focusing on the desired information for this aspect of the evaluation, the project director and evaluator should decide on the purposes that information on the environment of the program may play in the overall evaluation plan. This will define the scope of this part of the evaluation. From this, the relevant evaluation questions may be developed.

A set of questions which relates to the program environment is provided in Exhibit 2. These are illustrative questions. The final set of questions should be defined and developed by the project director and evaluator so that they meet the needs of their local program.

After the questions are specified, the evaluator should identify the specific variables which are applicable to the questions, and the possible sources of data which may be used to answer the questions. Examples of variables and data sources are shown in Exhibit 2. Following this, a strategy for data collection and the data collection instruments themselves needs to be developed. However, much of the data should be available from the project grant proposal or application. Therefore, new data may not have to be collected unless the existing data are outdated. If new data are required, they may be available from community agencies such as the local economic development agency, local or state employment department, and Chamber of Commerce.

The findings which result from this part of the evaluation will eventually help explain the results of the outcome evaluation. For example, if project goals concerning placement and stable employment are not achieved, it may be because the project is providing training in vocational areas which are inappropriate for the present economic environment of the local community (no jobs are available). Thus, the evaluation results can help the project director make programming decisions to rectify the situation.

EXHIBIT 2

PROGRAM ENVIRONMENT: EXAMPLES OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS, VARIABLES, AND DATA SOURCES

	Evaluation Questions	Variables	Possible Data Sources
1.	What are the general characteristics of the community served by the BVT project?	Total population; number of LEP adults by language group; demographics of the LEP adults.	Published Census Reports
2.	What are the employment and economic characteristics of the community in which the project is located?	Unemployment rate; mean family income of general population and LEP population	Local Labor Department
3.	How many LEP adults in the community need employment and related services?	Number of LEP adults seeking employment; number of LEP adults unemployed; number of LEP adults underemployed.	Local Labor Department
4.	How many LEP adults need vocational training?	Number of LEP adults needing BVT	Local Labor Department
5.	What kinds of jobs are available in the community for which the BVT project could train LEP adults?	Jobs available in community	Local Labor Department
6.	Which areas of vocational training are most needed by the LEP adults in the community?	Types of jobs available in community	Local Labor Department

V. PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

This chapter concerns that part of the evaluation related to the number and characteristics of the participants being trained by a BVT project. These data will be collected during recruitment periods or upon entry to the program. Most participant data will be descriptive in nature, such as age, ethnicity, education, years lived in U.S., etc. Some data, however, will be baseline measures related to project objectives. These data will be compared to data collected at completion of training to determine project effects. Examples of these data are language proficiency scores, employment status, and wages at or prior to program entry.

The specific data to be collected on participants should be determined by the project director and evaluator, and depends on the issues which they choose to address. From this, a set of evaluation questions should be developed by the evaluator which focus on these issues. This then leads to specification of the variables on which data should be collected, and the development of the data collection plans and instruments.

Evaluation questions which concern program participants are shown in Exhibit 3 along with examples of the relevant variables and data sources. These questions are examples, not all of which may be of interest to a particular local program. Conversely, a particular local program may wish to add questions.

A project recruitment or intake form will generally supply most, if not all, of the information needs concerning the characteristics of project participants. The evaluator should examine the existing form(s) used by the project to determine whether all data needs are satisfied. If not, these forms should be modified so that the additional required information is collected.

A sample intake form is shown in Exhibit 4. The form can be adapted to meet the needs of any local program. Thus, additions, deletions, and modifications to the form may be made as desirable. The staff members responsible for recruitment and intake will then record the required intake data for each participant on these forms. The evaluator should then be responsible for summarizing the data across participants.

Except for the measurement of language proficiency, the data required by the questions in Exhibit 3 and the sample intake form in Exhibit 4 can be collected through interviews with program participants during recruitment or intake. Language proficiency measurement, discussed below, is more complicated.

The measurement of participants' English language proficiency is necessary for two reasons. First, it will provide the data for describing how well individual participants are progressing in increasing their English language skills. Second, it will provide the basis for assessing how well the project as a whole has met the goal of increasing job-related English language proficiency.

In order to select an appropriate language proficiency instrument, it is important to consider specific project goals and needs, as well as the characteristics of the instrument itself. Thus, the adequacy of any language proficiency measure should be assessed according to the criteria below:

- Is the instrument appropriate for adults?
- Does the measure assess the appropriate language areas?
- Is the measurement appropriate, i.e., does it take a discrete-point or integrative approach?
- Is the instrument technically sound, i.e., is the validity and reliability of the instrument adequate?

The first criterion requires project staff to assess the appropriateness of the instrument for limited English proficient (LEP) adults. This step is extremely important since there may be the temptation to simply adopt an existing instrument designed for LEP school-age youth. In rare instances, such an instrument could be used. However, in the majority of cases, such use would be inappropriate and the resulting information would be inadequate. If an instrument is not designed for an adult population, it will be critical to evaluate the content of the measures to make certain that it is appropriate for adults.

The second criterion requires that project staff select an instrument which measures the language skill areas which need to be assessed. The areas that can potentially be measured include all components of listening, reading, speaking and

writing. Before an instrument is selected, the project staff need to decide on the specific skill areas to be measured. This judgment should be made on the basis of project goals and vocational skill area(s) in which training is provided. In projects which train in vocational skill areas that require basic reading and writing (clerical, general office skills, and word processing), assessment of literacy* is necessary. In projects which focus on instructional areas that do not necessarily require literacy (cosmetology and building trades), only oracy skills** need to be measured.

The third criterion relates to the measurement approach taken by a particular language proficiency instrument. The two possible approaches are discrete-point or integrative. If the focus is on the assessment of individual aspects of language such as grammar, vocabulary, etc., the measurement approach is considered to be discrete-point. However, if the orientation is toward assessing an individual's functional language ability, the approach is integrative. At the simplest level, this latter approach includes the assessment of an individual's capability to listen to a basic conversation and to provide appropriate responses to questions regarding name, home address, listing of family members, etc. At a more sophisticated level, the assessment could require that an individual participate in a simulated job interview or dialogue appropriate to a work setting.

Since a general goal at the local level is to assist BVT participants to communicate in English in a job-related setting, a language proficiency instrument that takes an integrative approach is recommended. However, it should be noted that a discrete-point type instrument may also be appropriately used at the project level once an integrative assessment has been made and specific skills areas that need to be assessed for diagnostic purposes have been identified.

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* Literacy refers to reading and writing skills.
** Oracy refers to skills related to listening and speaking.

The fourth criterion concerns the technical qualities of the instrument. For example, it will be important to determine whether the testing materials include standardized administration and scoring procedures. Whether it is a published or project developed instrument, it will be important to review validity and reliability data in order to judge its adequacy.

The above four criteria provide a structure for project staff to evaluate and select language proficiency assessment instruments. It is important that any instrument be carefully evaluated in order to ensure the selection of one which is technically sound, and appropriate for the project and the language proficient levels of its participants.

The Basic English Skills Test, developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics, is recommended for use as the primary evaluation instrument for measuring English language proficiency. It is discussed in detail in Appendix B of this Guidebook. Other measures of English language proficiency are discussed in Appendix C. Local projects may choose whichever measures meet their needs. However, the Basic English Skills Test is required to be administered by Federal grantees for the purposes of the BVT Statistical Summary Report (Appendix A).

EXHIBIT 3

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS: EXAMPLES OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS, VARIABLES AND DATA SOURCES

	Evaluation Questions	Variables	Possible Data Sources
1.	How many individuals enter each training cycle?	Number of individuals enrolled	Program Records
2.	What are the demographic characteristics of the participants?	Age, Sex, Country of Origin, Native Language, Years of Formal Schooling, Achievement of High School Diploma or GED Certificate, Years Lived in U.S., Family Status, Number of Dependents.	Program Intake Form
3.	What is the level of English language proficiency of participants before they enter the program?	Scores on measures of English Language Proficiency	English Language Proficiency Test Given To Participants At Intake
4.	What is the level of native language proficiency of participants before they enter the program?	Scores of measures of Native Language Proficiency	Native Language Proficiency Test Given To Participants At Intake
5.	What are the vocational skills of participants at program entry?	Vocational Skills	Program Intake Form
6.	How much previous vocational training do participants have at program entry?	Years of Vocational Training; Areas of Vocational Training	Program Intake Form
7.	What are the job interests and goals of participants at program entry?	Job Interests; Job Goals	Program Intake Form
8.	What are the employment status and wages of participants at program entry?	Employment Status; Public Assistance and Unemployment Benefits Received; Hourly Wages Prior to Program Entry.	Program Intake Form

EXHIBIT 4

SAMPLE OF BVT PROGRAM INTAKE FORM

Date of Interview:_____

Name:_____ Social Security Number:_____

Address:_____

_____

Telephone Number:_____

Vocational Training Program:_____ Cycle:_____

1. Sex: Male |___| Female |___| Age:___Years
   Date of Birth:_____

2. Country of Origin:_____ Native Language: _____

3. U.S. Citizen: Yes |___| No |___| If no, Citizen of_____

4. Language(s) Spoken Fluently_____

5. Language(s) person can read/write_____

6. Number of Years Lived in U.S._____Years

7. Years of School Completed: Prior to Arrival in U.S.:_____Years
   In U.S.:_____Years

8. U.S. High School Diploma: Yes |___| No |___|

9. GED Equivalency: Yes |___| No |___|

10. Secondary School Diploma from Another Country Yes |___| No |___|

11. Single Parent: Yes |___| No |___|

12. Number of Dependents: _____

13. Prior to enrollment, was individual:

	Yes	No
Unemployed:	☐	☐
Receiving Unemployment Insurance Benefits:	☐	☐
Receiving Public Assistance Benefits:	☐	☐
What Type of Benefits are Received: _____		
Employed 35 or more hours per week:	☐	☐
Employed less than 35 hours per week:	☐	☐

If Employed, where _____
Describe Job _____
_____
_____

Current Gross Wages Per Hour: $_____ per hour

14. Previous Work History _____
_____
_____
_____

15. English Language Skills:

Date BEST Test Administered: _____ Form _____
BEST Score: _____

16. Enrolled in School or Other Training Program Yes ☐ No ☐

17. Vocational Skills of Individual: _____
_____
_____

18. Prior Vocational Training: _____
_____
_____

19. Job Interests and Goals: _____
_____
_____

VI. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter focuses on documenting how a BVT project is implemented and the services which are provided. This includes recruitment, intake and assessment activities; vocational and English-language instruction; job counseling and other support services; job development; and job placement. The data to be collected will focus on what has actually taken place, rather than what was originally planned. With proper documentation, the project staff can assess the changes needed for future program improvement.

The project director and the evaluator should work together to decide on the specific activities and services of the BVT program which are to be described or documented, and the level of detail desired. Once the information needs have been determined, the project director and evaluator should develop a set of evaluation questions which focus the data collection requirements. Sample questions, shown in Exhibit 5, cover a wide range of BVT program activities. The project director and local evaluator should review these and select the ones which are relevant to their program. In addition, modifications and additions to these questions should be made to fit the needs of the individual project.

The evaluator will be responsible for developing the plans and instruments for collecting the data to answer the evaluation questions. These data are expected to be collected mostly from project records and directly from the project director and his/her staff. Two evaluation strategies are available:

- the evaluator can review project records and interview the project director and staff to determine what activities are being implemented and how appropriate they are to the needs of the participants; or
- the project director and staff members can complete written questionnaires prepared by the evaluator which address the same issues.

The latter data collection strategy is probably more cost effective since it minimizes the time of the evaluator.

EXHIBIT 5

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION: EXAMPLES OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS, VARIABLES, AND DATA SOURCES

Evaluation Questions	Variables	Possible Data Sources
1. What are the objectives of the BVT project? Are these objectives clearly stated and measurable?	Program Objectives	Project Application; Management Plan
2. In what vocational areas does training take place?	Vocational Area	Project Application and Records
3. What language groups are being served?	Languages	Intake Form
4. How long is each training cycle?	Length of Training	Project Schedule
5. How many training cycles are taught each year?	Number of Training Cycles Offered	Project Schedule
6. What is the total number of hours of vocational training provided to each participant?	Number of Training Hours	Project Schedule
7. What is the total number of hours of English language instruction provided to each participant?	Number of Instructional Hours; Absentee Rates	Project Schedule; Project Records
8. What are the instructor/participant ratios for vocational and English language training?	Number of Trainees; Number of Instructors	Project Records
9. To what extent is enrollment meeting the project goals?	Project Objectives; Number of Participants	Project Application; Project Records
10. How is recruitment conducted? What criteria are used for accepting individuals for training? Are criteria appropriate?	Recruitment Procedures; Enrollment Criteria	Project Application; Observation
11. How is the project staffed? Is staffing appropriate and sufficient for project operation?	Number of Staff by Position	Project Records

Evaluation Questions	Variables	Possible Data Sources
12. What are the qualifications of the staff? Do staff have necessary qualifications to meet the needs of the participants in both the vocational and English language training components?	Background and Experience of Staff	Employment Applications; Staff Resumes and Interviews
13. What kind of staff development and training are provided to staff members? Are development and training appropriate and sufficient?	Staff Development and Training Activities	Project Records; Staff Interviews; Observations
14. What specific vocational competencies are addressed by the vocational training program?	Vocational Competencies	Project Application; Project Records
15. What specific English language competencies are addressed by the training program? Are competencies appropriate and sufficient?	English Language Competencies	Project Application; Project Records
16. What criteria are specified for successfully completing the program? Are criteria appropriate?	Completion Criteria	Project Application; Project Records
17. Does the training curriculum as implemented follow the project plan? Is curriculum appropriate?	Description of Training	Project Application; Project Records; Staff Interviews
18. What training methods and materials are used? Are the methods appropriate?	Description of Training; Methods and Materials	Project Application; Staff Interviews, Observation
19. To what extent are the native language and English used in vocational training? Is the extent of use of both languages appropriate?	Percent Use of Native Language and English in Classroom	Staff Interviews Observations
20. What is the extent of coordination of the vocational and English language training components? Is the coordination appropriate and sufficient?	Extent of Coordination	Staff Interviews

	Evaluation Questions	Variables	Possible Data Sources
21.	What job counseling services are provided to participants? Are these services appropriate and sufficient?	Description of Job Counseling Services; Number of Counseling Sessions; Number and Percent of Participants Counseled; Number of Counseling Hours Provided	Project Application; Project Records; Staff Interiews; Observation
22.	What job development activities are implemented by the staff? Are these activities appropriate and sufficient?	Description of Job Development Activities; Number of Employers Contacted	Project Application; Project Records; Staff Interviews; Observation
23.	What job placement services are provided to participants? Are these services appropriate and sufficient?	Description of Job Placement Services; Number and Percent of Participants Served	Project Application; Project Records; Staff and Participant Interviews; Observation
24.	How are employers and the general community involved in the training program? Is this involvement appropriate and sufficient?	Number of Group and Individual Meetings Held; Number of Phone and Written Communications	Project Application; Project Records; Staff and Employer Interviews.
25.	What facilities and equipment are used by the program? Are the facilities and equipment appropriate and sufficient?	Description of Facilities and Equipment	Project Application; Staff Interviews; Observation
26.	What is cost of training per participant?	Total Project Funding; Number of Participants	Project Budget; Project Records

VII. PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Program outcome data are used to determine the extent to which a BVT program is meeting its goals and objectives. Generally, these goals and objectives are:

- stable employment;
- increased job-related English proficiency:
- increased earning capabilty; and
- greater career advancement opportunities.

The extent to which other goals and objectives are achieved should also be measured as part of the evaluation.

To measure the success of a local BVT program, outcome data should be collected at three points in time:

- Program Completion;
- 90 Days Following Initial Job Placement; and
- 180 Days Following Initial Job Placement.

At program completion, data should be collected on vocational and English language training outcomes, and on job placements. Training outcomes refer to data concerning the extent to which participants have learned the vocational knowledge and skills taught by the program, and have increased their English language proficiency compared to proficiency at program entry. Job placement is concerned with placement in jobs relevant to training, and with wages and benefits received.

Follow-up data should focus on job retention and advancement, increases in wages, satisfaction of former participants with their jobs and with the training which was provided by the BVT program, and satisfaction of employers with the former participants they employ, especially their vocational and English language skills.

As with the other evaluation components, the project director and evaluator must work jointly to define the scope of the outcome data to be collected. This should be accomplished by developing a set of evaluation questions to assess the extent to which the project's goals and objectives are met. A list of evaluation questions directed at the outcomes of BVT programs is shown in Exhibit 6. Also shown are the

relevant variables which relate to the questions and possible sources from whom data may be collected. Project directors and local evaluators should carefully examine these questions and select those which are applicable to their program. Additional evaluation questions may also be specified which address any special issues and concerns of the local program.

At a minimum, the data required at program completion should be:

- number of completers;
- achievement of vocational training objectives and competencies;
- English language proficiency scores;
- number of completers placed in jobs related to vocational area in which trained; and
- for those placed, wages per hour.

Additional data will also be required depending on the final set of evaluation questions specified by the project director and evaluator.

The data on achievement of vocational training objectives and competencies should be available from project records. A test or tests of English language proficiency should be administered at program completion or exit. The measure(s) should be the same as were used at program entry. In this manner, pre/post-test differences can be calculated to measure any change in English language proficiency. Data on job placements and wages should be obtained from records kept by the job placement counselor or collected directly from the former trainees.

The minimum data required at each of the two follow-up periods are:

- number employed;
- wages per hour;
- number receiving wage increase or higher paying job since initial placement following training; and
- number obtaining job promotions since initial placement following training.

As with the program completion data, additional data will be required depending on the evaluation questions which are specified.

Follow-up data can be collected from the former program participants or from their employers. First priority should be given to collecting data from former participants, rather than from busy employers. It is suggested that contacts with employers to obtain project evaluation data be kept to a minimum.

The data collection instruments which are generally needed include a program completion data sheet for collecting final training and placement data, and interview forms or questionnaires for collecting follow-up data from former participants and/or from employers. Samples of these data collection instruments may be found in Exhibits 7, 8, and 9. These examples may be adapted so that they collect the specific data required by each local project.

Appropriate data collection procedures and record-keeping systems need to be developed to ensure that program completion, placement, and follow-up data are collected, recorded, and filed. This will ensure that the data are readily available for tabulation and summary to meet the time schedule for the evaluation. Early planning by the evaluator and project director is one of the key elements to success in any data collection effort. This is especially true for the development of a record-keeping system for the collection of follow-up data. First, a tickler file or calendar must be established so that the project staff can keep track of when each participant has been placed in a job, and when the 90-day and 180-day follow-up periods occur. Without such a system, the staff will not be able to keep track of the appropriate time to follow-up each program completer. Second, an address file and a placement file for program completers need to be continually up-dated. Addressed and stamped post-cards may be given to participants when they complete training so they can notify the program of address and job changes in a convenient manner. Alternatively, participants can be asked to notify the project staff by telephone when they change addresses or jobs. Without these procedures, follow-up will be extremely difficult.

In general, follow-up data should be collected via telephone interviews with former participants. Before completing training, each participant should be told to expect these calls, and to keep the project informed of address and telephone number changes. On the other hand, collecting follow-up data from employers is a very difficult task, as employers are reluctant to give out personnel information, and generally are busy and do not like to be bothered. However, if collection of data from employers is required, the job development staff should lay the groundwork for follow-up by building a good rapport with employers when participants are placed. By establishing good relationships at these times, follow-up data can be more easily collected.

The evaluator, with input from the project director, should be responsible for developing the instruments, procedures, and record-keeping systems. The project staff, under the supervision of the project director, should have the responsibility of collecting and recording the required data. Training the staff in all data collection and record-keeping procedures should be the responsibility of the evaluator.

EXHIBIT 6

PROGRAM OUTCOMES: EXAMPLES OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS, VARIABLES, AND DATA SOURCES

	Evaluation Questions	Variables	Possible Data Sources
A.	Program Completion and Placement		
1.	How many participants completed the training program?	Number of Completions	Program Records
2.	To what extent did participants increase their English language skills?	Pre/Post Measures of English Language Skills; Achievement of Training Objectives	Program Records
3.	To what extent did participants increase their vocational skills and knowledge?	Achievement of Vocational Training Objectives and Competencies; Pre/Post Measures of Vocational Skills and Knowledge	Completers; Program Records
4.	How many completers were placed in jobs following training? How many were placed in training-related jobs, full-time and part-time, with and without medical benefits?	Number of Completers Placed in Jobs	Completers; Program Reports
5.	What is the average gross wage per hour of participants placed in jobs?	Wages Per Hour	Completers
6.	What is the average number of hours worked per week of participants placed in jobs?	Number of Hours Worked	Completers
7.	How many completers were placed in or enrolled in further education or training programs following completion of training?	Number of Completers Placed or Enrolled for Further Education or Training.	Completers
8.	What is degree of completers' satisfaction with training program?	Ratings of Satisfaction	Completers

Evaluation Questions	Variables	Possible Data Sources
B. Follow-Up at 90 and 180 Days Following Initial Placement		
1. How many program completers were employed at 90 days and 180 days following initial placement in training-related and non-training related, full-time and part-time jobs, with and without medical benefits?	Number of Completers Employed	Completers; Employers
2. What is average gross wage per hour of completers at 90 and 180 days following initial placement?	Wages Per Hour	Completers; Employers
3. What is the average number of hours worked per week of completers, at 90 and 180 days following initial placement?	Number of Hours Worked	Completers; Employers
4. How many completers are enrolled in school or other training program at 90 and 180 days following initial placement?	Number of Completers Enrolled in School or Training Program	Completers
5. How many completers are unemployed at 90 and 180 days following initial placement?	Number of Completers Unemployed	Completers
6. How many completers were employed at any time during the 90 and 180-day period following initial placement?	Number of Completers Employed at Any Time During Follow-up Period	Completers; Employers
7. How many completers obtained job promotions during the 90 and 180-day period following initial placement?	Number of Completers Who Obtained Job Promotions or Higher Level Jobs	Completers; Employers
8. How many completers received wage increases or obtained a higher paying job during the 90 and 180-day period following initial placement?	Number of Completers Who Received Wage Increase	Completers; Employers

Evaluation Questions	Variables	Possible Data Sources
9. How satisfied are former participants with the jobs at 90 and 180 days following initial placement?	Ratings of Job Satisfaction	Completers
10. How satisfied are employers with the vocational and English skills of the program completers they hired?	Ratings of Employer Satisfaction with Vocational Skills and English Language Skills	Employers

EXHIBIT 7

BVT PROGRAM JOB PLACEMENT INFORMATION

Name:_____

Vocational Training Program:_____

Program Completion Date:_____

A. Placed in Job at Program Completion or Exit? |___| Yes |___| No

If no, is individual seeking employment? |___| Yes |___| No

If yes:
1. Name of Company_____

Address_____
Telephone_____
Supervisor's Name_____

If no, why not?
_____

2. Nature of Job:_____
_____
_____

3. Is Job Related to Training? |___| Yes |___| No

4. Date Hired:_____

5. Date Job Begins:_____

6. Number of Hours to be Worked Per Week: _____

7. Starting Gross Wage Per Hour: _____

8. Does Job Include Medical Benefits?

|___| Yes |___| No

B. Enrolled for Further Education at Training Within 30 Days of Program Completion or Exit?

|___| Yes |___| No

Follow-up Dates

90 Days:_____
180 Days:_____

EXHIBIT 8

FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF FORMER BVT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

☐ 90-Day Follow-up

☐ 180-Day Follow-up

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone Number: _____

Date Individual Completed or Exited Program: _____

Date this Survey Completed: _____

1. Are you currently employed?

☐ Yes (Continue Survey)

☐ No

If no, Have you been employed at any time since completion of or exit from BVT program?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Who do you work for?

3. Is this same or different employer from your first job after completing the BVT training program?

Same ☐

Different ☐

If different, name, address and telephone number of employer _____

_____

_____

4. Have you been employed continuously since completion of or exit from the vocational training program?

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Please describe your current job.

6. Is your current job:

   Same as when originally hired |___|

   A promotion from original job |___|

   A demotion from original job |___|

   Different job, but neither a promotion nor a demotion |___|

7. What is your current gross hourly wage? $_____ per hour

8. Are you being paid more, less, or the same as the first job you obtained after you completed or exited from the vocational training program?

   More |___|

   Less |___|

   The Same |___|

9. How many hours do you work per week? _____

10. Do you receive medical benefits from your employer?

    |___| Yes

    |___| No

11. Are there opportunities for you to advance at the place you work?

    Many Opportunities |___|

    Few Opportunities |___|

    No Opportunities |___|

    Explain:_____

    _____

12. How satisfied are you with the vocational training you received from the BVT program?

    Very Satisfied |___|

    Satisfied |___|

    Dissatisfied |___|

    Very Dissatisfied |___|

13. How satisfied are you with the English language instruction you received from the BVT program?

Very Satisfied |___|

Satisfied |___|

Dissatisfied |___|

Very Dissatisfied |___|

14. Would you recommend the BVT program to others?

|___| Yes

|___| No

Explain:_____

_____

15. Are you currently enrolled in any school, educational, or vocational training program?

|___| Yes

|___| No

Specify:_____

_____

16. How satisfied are you with your present job?

Like it very much |___|

Like it somewhat |___|

Neither like it nor dislike it |___|

Dislike it somewhat |___|

Dislike it a lot |___|

Why?_____

_____

17. What changes in the vocational training program do you suggest for the future?

a) Vocational Training_____

_____

b) English Language Training_____

_____

c) Other_____

_____

EXHIBIT 9

EMPLOYER FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

|___| 90-Day Follow-up

|___| 180-Day Follow-up

Name of Employee:_____

Company Name:_____ Type of Business:_____

1. Is the above individual currently employed by you or your company?

   |___| Yes [Continue with Survey.]

   |___| No [If no, ask why not and stop.]

   _____

   _____

2. Briefly describe this employee's current job.

   _____

   _____

3. How many hours per week does individual work:_____

4. Is his/her current job:

   Same as when originally hired |___|

   Promotion from original job with company |___|

   Demotion from original job with company |___|

   Different job, but neither a promotion nor demotion |___|

5. What is employee's present gross hourly wage? $_____per hour.

6. Is this employee's wage higher, lower, or the same as when originally hired?

   Higher |___|

   Lower |___|

   The Same |___|

7. Does employee receive medical benefits?

   |___| Yes |___| No

8. Are there opportunities for this employee to advance at your company?

   Many Opportunities |___|

   Few Opportunities |___|

   No Opportunities |___|

   Explain:_____

   _____

9. Compared to other individuals at the same job level, how would you rate this employee's job skills?

   Above Average |___|

   Average |___|

   Below Average |___|

10. Is this employee's English language skills sufficient to perform his/her current job?

    English language skills are sufficient |___|

    English language skills are a problem |___|

11. Does this employee have the English skills necessary to advance at your company?

    |___| Yes

    |___| No

    Explain:_____

    _____

12. In general, how satisfied are you with this employee's work?

    Very Satisfied |___|

    Satisfied |___|

    Somewhat Satisfied |___|

    Dissatisfied |___|

13. What changes, if any, should the BVT program make in its training program to enable its trainees to be more valuable employees to your company? Do individuals need more training? If so, in what areas?

VIII. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Following data collection, the next steps in the evaluation process involve data analysis and preparation of a report. These steps require the expertise of an experienced evaluator who is objective and independent of the project and grantee. This is important for the acceptability of the report's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

The evaluator will be responsible for developing and carrying out a data analysis plan which is compatible with the evaluation's goals and audience. To a large extent, data will be descriptive in nature and may be presented in narrative and tabular format. However, comparisons of pre- and post-measures related to English-language proficiency, vocational skills and knowledge, job wages, etc., may require more sophisticated techniques. These depend on the nature of the data.

The data will be analyzed to answer the evaluation questions specified in the evaluation plan. Thus, the analysis will allow the evaluator to:

- describe the program environment;
- describe the program participants;
- describe the program activities and services;
- describe the outcomes;
- examine and assess the extent to which the program plan was followed;
- examine and assess the extent to which the outcomes met the program goals and objectives; and
- examine how the program environment, participants, activities, and services affected the extent to which the outcomes were achieved, and how the program can be improved to achieve increased success.

An evaluation report will then:

- describe the accomplishments of the program, identifying those elements of the program that were the most effective;
- describe elements of the program that were ineffective and problematic as well as areas that need modifications in the future;
- describe the outcomes or the impact of program services on the participants; and

- document how the program environment, activities, and services contributed to the accomplishment or lack of accomplishment of the program goals and objectives.

The level of information and documentation suggested in this Guidebook will make the report quite useful for making decisions about improving program services, instructional strategies, etc., for the future program cycles. In other words, the evaluation report is a decision-making and planning tool for the project director and his/her staff. The information presented in the report, as guided by the evaluation questions, will support the broad management functions of decision-making, program improvement, accountability, and quality control.

It is important to keep the report's audience in mind. In most cases, this will be the project director and agency administrators. These individuals may not be experienced in the technical aspects of data analysis. Therefore, the report should present data in a straightforward manner, using tabular presentations to help the reader. Interpretations and conclusions drawn from the data and implications for future directions should be discussed in a clear narrative. An example of a report outline is provided in Exhibit 10 on the next page.

In addition to the written report, the evaluator should provide an oral briefing to the project director, project staff, and appropriate administrators. This should take place after those individuals have had a chance to read the report. The briefing should first include a short presentation on the most important findings and on the conclusions and recommendations drawn by the evaluator. A question and answer period following that presentation will allow for discussion of those conclusions and recommendations that are most relevant to improving the program in order to yield greater benefits to participants, employers, and the community-at-large. The project director should then prepare and execute an action plan for implementing the appropriate recommendations. In sum, evaluation results should always be used for program improvement. Learning from the past to improve future programming is always possible and should be a primary management goal.

EXHIBIT 10

ORGANIZATION OF EVALUATION REPORT

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (3-4 pages)
- Purpose
- Procedures
- Major Findings
- Conclusions and Recommendations

II. INTRODUCTION
- Background of Program
- Objectives of the Evaluation
- Summary of Procedures

III. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM ENVIRONMENT

IV. PROGRAM COMPONENTS
- Descriptions of Program Activities and Services
- Deviations from Plan in Grant Application

V. NUMBER AND CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

VI. PROGRAM OUTCOMES
- Program Completion and Initial Placement
- Follow-Up

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: BVT Statistical Summary Report

APPENDIX B: The Basic English Skills Test (B.E.S.T.): Measurement of English Language Proficiency for the BVT Statistical Summary Report

APPENDIX C: Review of Language Proficiency Measures

APPENDIX A

BVT STATISTICAL SUMMARY REPORT

BVT STATISTICAL SUMMARY REPORT

Background

The purpose of the BVT Statistical Summary Report is to assist federally-funded BVT projects in collecting and reporting data to the federal BVE Program Office. By standardizing the data to be reported, data can be aggregated across projects. This will enable the federal office to assess the overall effectiveness of the grant program in meeting its four major goals:

- stable employment for limited English proficient adults;
- increased job-related English language proficiency for limited English proficient adults;
- increased earning capability for limited English proficient adults; and
- greater career advancement opportunities for limited English proficient adults.

The BVT Statistical Summary Report has been designed to keep the reporting burden to a minimum. Only basic program, participant and outcome data are requested. This is important information that, in addition to being useful to the federal program office, will be useful to local projects for program planning and improvement.

The Report is divided into four sections:

- Section A reports descriptive information on participants, including English language proficiency scores on the Basic English Skills Test (BEST). Individual scores on the BEST taken at program intake may be recorded on the BEST Data Recording Form (see Appendix B). Average scores across participants are then computed and recorded in Item 11 of Section A.
- Section B reports completion and initial placement data. Scores of English language proficiency at the completion of the program should be recorded on the BEST Data Recording Form and average scores and average pre/post test differences across participants are then reported in Item 10 of Section B.

- Section C reports follow-up data on former participants at 90 days after initial job placement. To the extent possible, this follow-up information should be collected directly from the former participants. If this is not possible, the data should be collected from employers.

- Section D reports the same follow-up data as Section C, but at 180 days after initial placement.

Instructions

A 6-month reporting schedule has been established, with reports due within 30 days of the end of each period. The reporting periods and report deadlines are as follows:

Reporting Period	Report Deadline
January 1 - June 30	July 31
July 1 - December 31	January 31

The BVT Statistical Summary Report requests data on each project cycle, separated by vocational area, every six months. Thus, every six months a separate Statistical Summary Report is to be completed for each vocational training area that a project offers, and for each cycle of training.

The Statistical Summary Report should also be cumulative. Each report should provide cumulative totals as of the end of each reporting period. Because local BVT projects differ, with each implementing training cycles of varying length, projects may not be able to complete all sections of the Statistical Summary Report at the end of a particular reporting period. However, in that each report is to be cumulative, reports can be updated by providing previously unavailable information at the end of subsequent reporting periods.

For example, if a project is in mid-cycle when a reporting period ends, only participant data will be reported on the Statistical Summary Report (Section A). Data on completions, placements, and follow-up will not yet be available. With cumulative reporting, however, reports will be continually updated in subsequent reporting periods. Eventually, all sections of the report will be completed. The appropriate box at the beginning of each section should be checked to indicate whether the data provided in that section reflect interim or final results. Interim data means that additional data for that section of the report will be

available in subsequent reporting periods, while final data indicates that the data reported in that section of the report is complete.

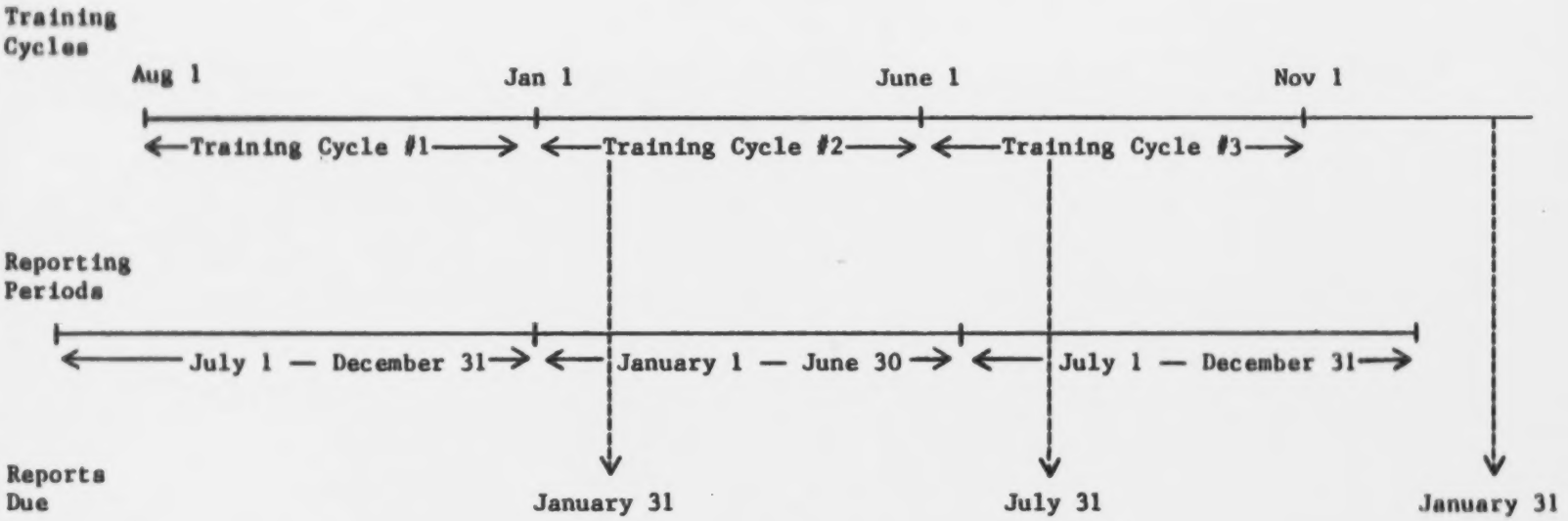
The chart on the next page illustrates the reporting requirements for a hypothetical BVT project conducting 3 five-month training cycles. The chart indicates those sections of the Statistical Summary Report that can be completed for the different training cycles in a given reporting period. **This chart is shown for illustrative purposes only!** Individual projects can use this example to help plot their reporting requirements, taking into account their own training cycles.

Summary

When filling out the BVT Statistical Summary Report, please keep the following points in mind:

- The report requests basic program, participant and outcome data that will be useful to your project in program planning and improvement;
- The report will enable the federal BVE Program Office to aggregate data across all of the federal BVT projects and to assess the overall effectiveness of the federal grant program;
- The report calls for cycle reporting, by vocational area, every six months; and
- The report should show cumulative totals; after each reporting period, the information provided in the previous report will be updated, until all the requested information has been reported.

ILLUSTRATION OF REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR THREE CYCLES OF A FIVE-MONTH TRAINING COURSE



Report Contents

Cycle #1 Report	Cycle #1 Report	Cycle #1 Report
Section A: Complete Data Section B: Interim Data	Section B & C: Complete Data Section D: Interim Data	Section D: Complete Data
	Cycle #2 Report	**Cycle #2 Report**
	Section A & B: Complete Data	Section C: Complete Data Section D: Interim Data
	Cycle #3 Report	**Cycle #3 Report**
	Section A: Complete Data	Section B: Complete Data

BVT STATISTICAL SUMMARY REPORT

BVT Program:_____

Vocational Training Area:_____ Cycle:_____

Cycle Start Date:_____

Cycle Completion Date:_____

Scheduled Number of Weeks of Training in Cycle: _____

Average Number of Hours Per Week of Vocational Training: _____

Total Numbers of Hours of Vocational Training in Cycle: _____

Average Number of Hours Per Week of VESL: _____

Total Number of Hours of VESL in Cycle: _____

Reporting Period:_____ to_____

_____

Signature of Project Director Date

A. PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS:

☐ Interim Data ☐ Final Data

1. Total Number of Participants* _____

2. Number of Participants by Age and Sex

	Males	Females
Under 18	_____	_____
18 - 21	_____	_____
22 - 24	_____	_____
25 - 30	_____	_____
31 - 40	_____	_____
41 - 50	_____	_____
51 and over	_____	_____

3. Number of Participants by Country of Origin**

Country	Number
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Number of Participants by Native Language***

Spanish	_____
Chinese	_____
Russian	_____
Khmer	_____
Vietnamese	_____
Farsi	_____
Lao	_____
_____	_____

* Participants are those individuals who began training in this cycle and remained in training for at least the initial two weeks.

** Country of origin is defined as the country with which an individual identifies, either as a birthplace or as a place in which he/she has spent some significant part of his/her life.

*** Native language is the language first learned and used at home.

5. Number of Participants by Years of School Completed

	Prior to Arrival in U.S.	In U.S.
Less than 4 years	_____	_____
4 - 8	_____	_____
9 - 10	_____	_____
11 - 12	_____	_____
Over 12 years	_____	_____

6. Number of Participants with U.S. High School Diploma or GED Equivalency _____

7. Number of Participants with Secondary School Diploma from Another Country* _____

8. Number of Participants by Years Lived in U.S.

Less than 1 year	_____
1 - 2 years	_____
3 - 5 years	_____
Over 5 years	_____

9. Number of Participants with

Zero dependents	_____
1 dependent	_____
2 dependents	_____
3 - 4 dependents	_____
5 or more dependents	_____

10. Number of Participants who are Single Parents _____

11. English Language Skills at Program Entry:
Basic English Skills Test (BEST), Core Section

Number of Participants with Scaled Scores of

0 - 8	_____
9 - 15	_____
16 - 28	_____
29 - 41	_____
42 - 50	_____
51 - 57	_____
58 - 64	_____
65+	_____
Average Score:	_____

* If native country or country of origin does not award a secondary school diploma, any diploma or certificate may be counted which is awarded for roughly the same number of years of education needed for a high school diploma in U.S.

12. Immediately Prior to Entering Training,*

a) Number of participants who were employed 35 or more hours per week _____

b) Number of participants who were employed less than 35 hours per week _____

c) Number of participants who were enrolled in school or other training program _____

d) Number of participants who were unemployed _____

e) Number of participants who were receiving public assistance benefits _____

f) Number of participants who were receiving unemployment insurance benefits _____

13. Of those participants who were employed immediately prior to beginning training, average gross wage per hour** _____

---

* Note that an individual may fall in more than one category.

** Include individuals who worked both full-time and part-time (Item 12a and 12b).

B. PROGRAM COMPLETIONS AND INITIAL PLACEMENTS*

☐ Interim Data ☐ Final Data

1. Number of Completers** ____

2. Number of Participants Who Left the Program as a Non-Completer ____

3. Number of Participants Who Remain in Training ____

4. Number of Completers Placed in Initial Job

   a. Within 30 Days of Completion ____
   b. Between 31-45 Days of Completion ____
   c. Between 46-60 Days of Completion ____
   d. Between 61-90 Days of Completion ____
   e. 91 Days or More Following Completion ____
   Total ____

5. Of total in Item B4:

	35 or More Hrs/Wk		Less Than 35 Hrs/Wk	
	Total	With Medical Benefits	Total	With Medical Benefits
a. Number Placed in Jobs for Which Trained				
b. Number Placed in Other Jobs				

6. Of Completers Placed in Jobs (Item B4 Total), Average Starting Gross Wage Per Hour ____

7. Of Completers Placed in Jobs (Item B4 Total), Average Number of Hours Worked Per Week ____

* Report cumulative totals for this cylcle at the end of this reporting period.

** A completer is an individual who meets at least one of the following criteria:
- successfully completed the training program;
- placed in or obtained a job with higher wages and/or better advancement potential than job held prior to training;
- enrolled for further education or advanced training.

8. Number of Completers Not Placed in a Job, but Seeking Employment _____

9. Number of Completers Enrolled for Further Education or Training _____

10. English Language Skills at Program Completion or Exit: Basic English Skills Test (BEST), Core Section

Number of Completers with Scaled Scores of

0 - 8	_____
9 - 15	_____
16 - 28	_____
29 - 41	_____
42 - 50	_____
51 - 57	_____
58 - 64	_____
65+	_____

Average Participant Score: _____

Average Pre/Post Difference: _____

Average Number of Days Between Pre- and Post-Tests _____

C. 90-DAY FOLLOW-UP*

☐ Interim Data ☐ Final Data

1. Potential Number of 90-Day Follow-Ups During this Reporting Period _____

2. Number of Individuals on Which 90-Day Follow-Up Data were Obtained _____

3. Total Number Employed at 90 Days Following Initial Placement:

	35 or More Hrs/Wk		Less Than 35 Hrs/Wk	
	Total	With Medical Benefits	Total	With Medical Benefits
a. In Vocational Area for Which Trained				
b. In other Type of Job				

4. For Those Employed at 90 Days Following Program Completion, Average Gross Wage Per Hour _____

5. For Those Employed at 90 Days Following Program Completion, Average Number of Hours Worked Per Week _____

6. Number Who Were Employed Continuously During the Follow-up Period** _____

7. Number Unemployed at 90 Days Following Initial Placement _____

8. Of Those in Item #2,

   a. Number Who Obtained Job Promotion or Advancement at Any Time During the Follow-up Period Period _____

   b. Number Who Received Wage Increase or Obtained Higher Paying Job at Any Time During the Follow-up Period _____

* Employment data are to be collected on individuals at 90 days following intial placement. Data on individuals whose 90th day following initial placement falls before the end of the reporting period are to be included in this section of the report. These individuals make up the potential number of 90-Day Follow-Ups called for in Item C1. Report cumulative totals for this cycle at the end of this reporting period.

** Employed continuously means employed at all times during the entire 90-day period following initial placement.

D. 180-DAY FOLLOW-UP*

☐ Interim Data ☐ Final Data

1. Potential Number of 180-Day Follow-Ups During this Reporting Period ____

2. Number of Individuals on Which 180-Day Follow-Up Data were Obtained ____

4. Total Number Employed at 180 Days Following Initial Placement:

	35 or More Hrs/Wk		Less Than 35 Hrs/Wk	
	Total	With Medical Benefits	Total	With Medical Benefits
a. In Vocational Area for Which Trained				
b. In other Type of Job				

4. For Those Employed at 180 Days Following Initial Placement, Average Gross Wage Per Hour ____

5. For Those Employed 180 Days Following Initial Placement, Average Number of Hours Worked Per Week ____

6. Number Who Were Employed Continuously During the Follow-up Period** ____

7. Number Unemployed at 180 Days Following Initial Placement ____

8. Of Those in Item #2,

   a. Number Who Obtained Job Promotion or Advancement at Any Time During the Follow-up Period ____

   b. Number Who Received Wage Increase or Obtained Higher Paying Job at Any Time During the Follow-up Period ____

* Employment data are to be collected on individuals at 180 days following initial placement. Data on individuals whose 180th day following initial placement falls before the end of the reporting period are to be included in this section of the report. These individuals make up the potential number of 180-Day Follow-Ups called for in Item D1. Report cumulative totals for this cycle at the end of this reporting period.

** Employed continuously means employed at all times during the entire 180-day period following initial placement.

APPENDIX B

THE BASIC ENGLISH SKILLS TEST (B.E.S.T.): MEASUREMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY FOR THE BVT STATISTICAL SUMMARY REPORT

THE BASIC ENGLISH SKILLS TEST (B.E.S.T): MEASUREMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY FOR THE BVT STATISTICAL SUMMARY REPORT

The BVT Statistical Summary Report requires that English language proficiency be measured in such a way that data are comparable over all projects. In order to accomplish this goal, it has been necessary to identify one measure of English language proficiency that can effectively and validly be used across BVT projects as a pre/post assessment of growth. However, since no currently available measure is designed to directly assess job-related English language proficiency across vocational areas, instruments that measure an individual's general ability to understand and communicate have been judged appropriate to measure the objective. The language proficiency measure that has been selected is the Basic English Skills Test (B.E.S.T.), which is to be administered by all federally-funded projects to all project participants on a pre- and post-test basis. The summary test scores are to be reported on the BVT Statistical Summary Report.

The Basic English Skills Test

The B.E.S.T. was developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in cooperation with ESL teachers and refugee program administrators. Principal funding was provided by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The instrument was designed to assess the English language proficiency of limited English proficient adults. It is a competency-based, integrative measure of basic functional language skills, including listening comprehension, fluency, communication, reading, and writing.

The test, which has three equated forms (B, C, and D), has two components. The first, the Core Section, is designed to assess basic English oral language proficiency; the second, the Literacy Skills Section, is intended to assess reading and writing skills. The Core Section is designed as an individually administered 10 to 15 minute interview. In contrast, the Literacy Skills Section is a group or individually administered test that simply requires a monitor and takes approximately one hour to administer.

The two sections of the B.E.S.T. were field tested with individuals whose native languages included Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Hmong, Lao, Cambodian/Khmer, Polish, and others. Thus, it is an instrument that can validly and effectively be used with adults from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.*

The topic and linguistic components of the B.E.S.T. were designed to assess "survival level" English competency. They were developed by experts in the area of English language proficiency, field tested, and modified based on the findings of the field test. An overview of the topic and linguistic components for both the Core and Literacy Skills Sections of the B.E.S.T. is presented on the following page.

The B.E.S.T. has three major uses. These are:

- as a placement instrument for adults entering language training courses;
- as a diagnostic assessment instrument; and
- as a measure of progress.

While these are all valid uses of the B.E.S.T., the main interest in the instrument for purposes of the BVT Statistical Summary Report is as a measure of oral English language proficiency, a skill necessary for all vocational areas taught by the current group of federal BVT projects. On the other hand, this is not true for literacy. Thus, only the Core Section of the B.E.S.T. is required to be administered and results reported on the Statistical Summary Report. For this reason, the Core Section is the focus of discussion here.

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*Eakin, E. & Ilyin, D. (in press). Basic English Skills Test. In Charles W. Stansfield and Karl J Krahuke (Eds.) TESOL Annotated Bibliography of ESL/EFL Tests. Washington, D.C.

B. E. S. T.

TOPIC AND LINGUISTIC COMPONENTS

TOPIC AREAS	CORE SECTION				LITERACY SKILLS SECTION	
	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	Additional Reading	Additional Writing
Greetings, Personal Information	Greets, gives name, spells name, states where from, how long in U.S.		Reads "Name" and "Address" on form	Fills out simple data form		Fills out more complex form; writes personal note to a friend
Time/Numbers	Tells time on clock	Understands spoken time	Reads time on clock		Locates given dates on calendar; finds tele-phone numbers in directory; reads train schedules; reads store hours	Writes date of birth on form
Money/Shopping for Food, Clothing	Asks "How much...?", "Where is...?" Compares shopping in U.S. and native country	Understands spoken price; shows correct coins			Reads price, price per lb., and other information on food labels; reads price, size, etc. on clothing labels	
Health and Parts of Body	Describes ailment, condition	Shows understanding of parts of body			Reads medical appoint- ment card; reads prescription medicine label	
Emergencies/Safety	Describes accident scene		Matches signs, e.g., CLOSED, STOP, etc., with appropriate photographs		Reads excerpts from driver's manual	
Housing	Identifies rooms of house, household activities				Reads ad for apartment	Fills out rent check, addresses envelope to landlord; writes note to landlord
Directions/ Clarification	Asks for, gives directions Asks for, gives clarification	Understands spoken directions	Reads map		In addition to the above, the Literacy Skills section tests comprehension of general reading materials (e.g., newspaper articles, schools notices	
Employment/ Training	Describes entry-level jobs and own job preferences; gives basic personal information in interview				Reads job want ad	Writes note to teacher explaining absence

The Core Section has 49 items and is individually administered as an oral interview. The interview itself takes approximately 10-15 minutes per examinee. A cut-off point is set, should an individual not be able to correctly respond to ten of the initial set of 13 or 14 questions, depending upon the form of the test.

The Core Section of the B.E.S.T. is designed to provide verbal and visual stimuli that elicit responses in English. The first set of prompts consists of basic questions about the individual's name, country of birth, and present place of residence. The individual is also asked to spell his or her name. The other prompts are keyed to photographs which require an individual to respond to a question based on the content of the stimulus, to recognize some basic sight vocabulary, and to follow a map representing a neighborhood. Reading (recognition of simple sight words such as "Closed", "Don't Walk", "Keep Out", etc,) and writing (writing name and address) tasks are also included in the Core Section. These items are intended to screen individuals for the Literacy Skills Section and are not included in the overall score for the Core Section.

The key grammatical structures assessed in the Core Section include the simple present and progressive tenses, yes/no, wh- questions, and negation. In addition, emphasis is given to the language functions of imparting information, seeking information, and seeking clarification.

Specific criteria are given for scoring responses in three areas: listening comprehension, communication, and fluency. Sub-scale scores are totaled and then converted to scaled scores which correspond to Student Performance Levels or SPLs.

Student Proficiency Levels are general descriptions of a student's language ability with respect to listening, oral communication, reading and writing. The SPLs are linked to employment readiness skills and to the qualities of communication that would be evidenced by a non-native English speaker in conversation with a native English speaker. The SPLs and corresponding B.E.S.T. scores are shown on the following pages. Because the B.E.S.T. is a measure that assesses language proficiency at the lower end of the scale, test scores on the B.E.S.T. cannot be linked beyond SPL VII.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS AND CORRESPONDENCE TO B.E.S.T. SCORES

0	No ability whatsoever. B.E.S.T. Core Section, Scaled Score = 0-8		
I	• Functions minimally, if at all, in English. B.E.S.T. Core Section Scaled Score = 9-15	• Can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral communication, and in which all tasks can be easily demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers can rarely communicate with a person at this level except through gestures.
II	• Functions in a very limited way in situations related to immediate needs. B.E.S.T. Core Section Scaled Score = 16-28	• Can handle only routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral communication, and in which all tasks can be easily demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have great difficulty communicating with a person at this level.
III	• Functions with some difficulty in situations related to immediate needs. B.E.S.T. Core Section Scaled Score = 29-41	• Can handle routine entry-level jobs that involve only the most basic oral communication, and in which all tasks can be demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have great difficulty communicating with a person at this level.
IV	• Can satisfy basic survival needs and a few very routine social demands. B.E.S.T. Core Section Scaled Score = 42-50	• Can handle entry-level jobs that involve some simple oral communication, but in which tasks can also be demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have difficulty communicating with a person at this level.
V	• Can satisfy basic survival needs and some limited social demands. B.E.S.T. Core Section Scaled Score = 51-57	• Can handle jobs and job training that involve following simple oral and very basic written instructions but in which most tasks can also be demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have some difficulty communicating with a person at this level.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS
AND
CORRESPONDENCE TO B.E.S.T. SCORES

VI	• Can satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. B.E.S.T. Core Section Scaled Score = 58-64	• Can handle jobs and job training that involve following simple oral and written instructions and diagrams.	• A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers will be able to communicate with a person at this level on familiar topics, but with difficulty and some effort.
VII	• Can satisfy survival needs and routine work and social demands. B.E.S.T. Core Section Scaled Score = 65+	• Can handle work that involves following oral and simple written instructions in familiar and some unfamiliar situations.	• A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can generally communicate with a person at this level on familiar topics.
VIII	• Can participate effectively in social and familiar work situations.		• A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can communicate with a person at this level on almost all topics.
IX	• Can participate fluently and accurately in practical, social, and work situations.		• A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can communicate easily with a person at this level.
X	• Ability equal to that of a native speaker of the same socio-economic level.		

Technical Qualities of the B.E.S.T.

Test reliability and validity are well documented in the B.E.S.T. Test Manual (1986). High internal consistency reliability estimates (KR-20) were found for both the Core and the Literacy Skills section for Forms B, C, and D ranging from a low of .770 (Form D, Total for listening, communication, and fluency) to a high of .911 (Form B, Total for listening, communication, and fluency). The reliability estimates for reading/writing in the Core Section ranged from .770 (Form D) to .826 (Form B).

High face validity is demonstrated by the fact that the content reflects real-life language use tasks. Other evidence of high validity is provided by the correlations of test scaled scores and teacher ratings of individuals overall language proficiency.

Scoring reliability was evaluated through an inter-rater scoring procedure. For the Core Section, the inter-rater reliability ranged from .992 (Form D, Listening Comprehension) to .749 (Form D, Pronunciation).

Interscale correlations were found to be substantially positive but sufficiently different to support the diagnostic use of individual test subsections. Since the B.E.S.T. has been designed to reflect actual language-use needed to function independently in the United States, the ability of an individual to perform these functions is important information that can be used to diagnose English language competencies for placement, to provide information for general planning purposes, and to serve as a measure of individual progress.

Guidelines for Using the B.E.S.T.

The B.E.S.T. should be administered on a pre- and post-test basis to each BVT project participant. The pre-test should be administered prior to the beginning of training or as soon after training begins as possible (within the first two weeks). The post-test should be administered at the end of training or, at least, during the last week of training. Any of the three equated forms (B,C, or D) may be used, but the same form should not be used as both a pre- and post-test for any individual. Trainees should not be told that a post-test similar to the pre-test will be given at the end of training.

The pre-test may be administered by any project staff person who is English proficient, including a participant's potential VESL or vocational education teacher. These staff members need to be adequately trained in the standardized administration and scoring procedures before they begin any testing. For the post-test, it is not advisable for a participant's teacher, particularly the individual's VESL teacher, to administer the test. In order to give the project flexibility in scheduling pre-testing and post-testing, it is advisable that several individuals on the staff be trained to administer the B.E.S.T. This will also give the project alternate test administrators should a staff member leave, and will ensure that there will be staff available to train newly hired individuals.

Testing should take place in a quiet room where there will be minimal interruptions. In order to administer the test comfortably, a desk or worktable needs to be available where the test administrator and the trainee can face each other. A flat surface is needed in order to be able to manipulate test materials.

The specific materials required to administer the B.E.S.T. include the Administrator's Manual (1986), the Core Section Picture Booklet, the Core Section Scoring Booklet, the Core Section Scoring Sheets, currency (3 one dollar bills, 2 quarters, 2 dimes, 2 nickels, and 4 pennies), and sharpened pencils.*

The test administrator should follow all the standardized instructions in the test administration manual. In general, the test administrator should maintain a neutral and natural demeanor; state items as written; repeat instructions or directions only once; stop at the specified cut-off, depending upon the form; and provide prompts, as appropriate, on fluency items.

Scoring of the examinee's responses are recorded in the Core Section Scoring Booklet or on the Core Section Scoring Sheet as the test is being administered. Responses are assessed in the following areas: listening comprehension,

*Test materials are available from the Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

communication, fluency, and reading and writing. Although the scoring booklet provides examples of correct responses, it is very important that the test administrator be trained in scoring student responses.

Once the testing session is completed, total scores are computed for each skill area. The test administrator then adds the scores for listening comprehension, communication, and fluency. Depending upon the form of the test, the total Core Section score is then converted to a scaled score which can be related to an SPL level.

The reading/writing component is not part of the Core Section score. It is based on the recognition of sight vocabulary items and on the completed bio-data item. Pronunciation is rated globally and is based on overall comprehensibility. These two scores may be calculated as general measures of language proficiency, but are not required for the BVT Statistical Summary Report.

Reporting B.E.S.T. Data on the BVT Statistical Summary Report.

A summary of the pretest scores for all participants in a training cycle are to be recorded on Part A of the BVT Statistical Summary Report. A summary of post-test scores, average pre/post differences, and average number of calendar days between tests are to be recorded on Part B of the Report.

In order to summarize the data for the BVT Statistical Report, it will be necessary for project staff to record and maintain individual student scores. For this purpose, the B.E.S.T. Data Recording Form has been developed (see attached form). This form is provided as a management tool for BVT project staff and can be used exactly as shown or revised to be more project specific. Whether this form or a project specific form is used, the important data to be recorded includes the date of the test, a record of the B.E.S.T. form (B, C, or D) administered to the trainee, and the individual scaled score. This information is to be recorded for both the pre- and post-tests and will provide the raw data for the language proficiency items on the BVT Statistical Summary Report.

B.E.S.T. DATA RECORDING FORM

Program: _____

Vocational Training Area: _____ Cycle: _____

Name of Participant	PRE-TEST			POST-TEST			PRE/POST DIFFERENCE DATA	
	Form Used	Date of Test	Scaled Score	Form Used	Date of Test	Scaled Score	Calendar Days Between Tests	Pre/Post Difference
Summary Data	Average Scaled Score			Average Scaled Score			Average No. of Days	Average Difference

APPENDIX C

REVIEW OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY MEASURES

REVIEW OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY MEASURES

In addition to the Basic English Skills Test (see Appendix B), various other measures of English language proficiency are available for use by BVT projects. These measures are reviewed below. They are divided into two categories: commercially published instruments and program developed instruments.

A. COMMERCIALLY PUBLISHED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY MEASURES

Commercially developed language proficiency instruments which may be appropriate for BVT projects represent measures that can be used to independently assess all areas of language proficiency including listening, speaking, reading and writing. To provide an overview of these measures, each is described relative to its purpose, stated objectives, and technical qualities.

1. Bilingual Vocational Oral Proficiency Test (BVOPT)

The BVOPT, published by Melton Peninsula (1981), is a criterion-referenced test, with the criteria based on "an extensive study of the actual language of the vocational setting." It is stated that each item on the the test is referenced to a set of communicative criteria and a set of linguistic criteria. However, it is also stated that while a "common set of communicative and linguistic criteria emerged from all the vocational areas examined - there was little commonality of vocabulary." Thus, in developing the BVOPT, rather than being specific to a range of vocational areas, the test items were based on high frequency words. Moreover, in order to appeal to a wide audience, topics used for test items are reflective of issues that would be common to any recent immigrant (e.g. food shopping, cleaning house, etc.).

An attempt was also made to link test items with linguistic structures. However, no provision is made to identify the linguistic structures used by students. Thus, it is difficult to assess whether an individual student can control any of the identified structures.

According to the test author,* the BVOPT has two purposes:

- To screen applicants for enrollment in programs designed for adult vocational training; and
- To assess gain in English proficiency achieved while participating in a vocational education program.

It should be noted that although the test purposes are stated, there is no further discussion of how the BVOPT meets these purposes.

The BVOPT is an integrative test that is designed to measure listening (receptive) and speaking (productive) skills. The test is individually administered, and has four subtests that require verbal or physical responses. The test sections include: Question/Answer, Open-ended Interview, Elicited Imitation, and Imperatives. Two alternate equivalent forms intended to be used for pre- and post-test purposes are available.

The Question/Answer section consists of a set of oral interview questions which increase in difficulty. This section is scored on a scale of 0 (inappropriate) to 1 (appropriate). The Open-Ended interview is used to obtain a sample of the examinee's speech. The speech is elicited from the students through an exercise which requires them to view and discuss a set of photographs. Based on the quality of the speech sample, the test administrator rates the individual's English language proficiency as "high," "medium," or "low" where each category is further subdivided into three levels. The Elicited Imitation requires that the examinee repeat a statement given by the administrator. Although a reference is not cited, this item type is based on

*Mary Galvan is the major BVOPT author (Messerschmitt, in press).

Natalicio's (1976) research affirming the utility of sentence repetition as a language proficiency assessment technique (Messerschmit, in press). Messerschmit indicates that she informally tested the validity of the elicited imitation technique with "native and high level non-native speakers" and found "clear differences in success ... thus, supporting the validity of this item type." Scoring is on a scale where "1" means perfect or intelligible and "0" represents a response that is unintelligible or not provided.

The final subtest, Imperatives, consists of a set of commands which are intended to assess aural comprehension. This subtest requires that the students physically manipulate objects in response to specific commands. The responses are rated "y" indicating that the examinee does exactly what is requested, "n" if the examinee does not do exactly what is requested, or "0" when the examinee gives no response.

Although the manual indicates that two types of scoring are possible, only one three-stage procedure is described. Raw scores are calculated for each subtest. The raw scores are then converted to adjusted scores. The total converted score is obtained by adding the four adjusted subtest scores. Individuals who score below 199 are considered "low level speakers"; "medium-level speakers" achieve a converted score between 200 to 299; and "high-level speakers" achieve a converted score above 300.

The test administrators' manual (Melton Peninsula, 1981) indicates that the test administrators "must be literate in English as well as have native or near-native proficiency in English" and that they "should also be able to give explanations and directions in the student's native language to reduce tension and frustration." It should be noted that these instructions could be problematic in cases where teachers are not bilingual or where students from a variety of language backgrounds are enrolled.

The administrator's manual also states that "no special training is needed for test administrators" (Melton Peninsula, 1981). Although instructions are clear, it would seem advisable to have a more experienced person familiarize a less experienced individual with the instrument.* In addition, to further ensure standardization, where several individuals may be called on to administer the instrument, it may be useful to have a native English speaker record test items on a cassette.

Content validity of the BVOPT was established by having respected authorities evaluate the extent to which the test measured what it purported to measure. It was also reviewed for cultural bias by other experts. The administrators' manual indicates that construct validity was also established. However, supporting documentation is not provided. Internal consistency is also discussed. Although tables are presented, clear documentation is not given to support the assertion that "subtests correlate with the test as a whole, and the two forms correlate with each other at a statistically-respectable level" (Melton Peninsula, 1981).

An argument is made that inter-rater reliability was not assessed because no attempt has been made to establish norms. In the same discussion, the statement is made that in the field test there were differences in the way raters scored students. However, "the staff concluded that differences between raters lay in interpretation of responses rather than in the questions themselves" (Melton Peninsula, 1981). The authors dismiss the problem of differences between raters by stating that:

> Great care has been taken in admonishing test administrators to evaluate responses on the basis of appropriateness and understandability rather than precise linguistic correctness. The staff is satisfied that trained and untrained test administrators get approximately the same results (Melton Peninsula, 1981).

*The principal author supports the need for training. She recommends that one to one and a half hours be alloted for training.

It would seem from the above statement that inter-rater reliability issues were of concern during the field test. However, the issue was not explored.

2. Diagnostic Test for Students of ESL*

The Diagnostic Test for Students of ESL (Davis, 1953) is a grammar-based measure designed to assess knowledge of English structures and idiomatic vocabulary. It is a 75-item, multiple choice, group administered test that is designed as a placement measure for adults in ESL courses. The test has commonly been used to assess applicants from non-English speaking European countries for admission to American universities. The test is available at three different levels. Specifically, the measure is designed to assess lexical comprehension and written syntactic comprehension.

Data on test reliability and validity are not available. The author provides suggested cut-off scores to indicate performance level. A Spearman-Brown split-half reliability coefficient of .96 was reported by Manuel (1959).

The test may be used both as part of the intake placement process and as a component of a program's overall evaluation. For this latter purpose, it is administered using different test levels mid-cycle and at the completion of the project to assess student progress. It should be noted that the project administrators where this test is used feel that the instrument is useful as training for clerical students who need to be prepared to take similar language proficiency measures as part of the job application process.

3. English Language Skills Assessment

The ELSA (Ilyin, Doherty, Lee, and Levy, 1980) is an integrative criterion-referenced placement test for adults. The ELSA is designed to measure meaning in context, as well as grammatical ability" (Doherty & Ilyin, 1981). The test, published by Harper & Row Publishers, consists of a series of

*Once available through McGraw-Hill, the Diagnostic Test for Students of ESL is no longer published.

reading passages in a multiple choice CLOZE format. It was specifically developed to assess different levels of ESL proficiency of "adult resident immigrants" (Doherty & Ilyin, 1981).

The ELSA is based on the syllabi of the adult education project at San Francisco Community College Centers. Although the primary purpose of the ELSA is placement, the authors state that it can also be used to measure achievement over time and to "provide comparison data on levels of instruction at Adult Centers" (Doherty & Ilyin, 1981).

The ELSA, which is group administered, is intended to discriminate three levels of English language proficiency - beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Six forms of the test, each with 25 items, are available. The beginning and intermediate levels each have two forms; one is in a conversation format and the other in a narrative format. It should be noted that despite the different formats there seems to be an assumption that the two tests are comparable; no discussion of this is found in the ELSA Manual. At the advanced level only one form in a narrative format is available.

Test scores are converted into "ELSA levels" of proficiency. The scale ranges from 100-800, where beginning level students score 300 or less, students at the intermediate level score between 300 and 500 and advanced students score 500 to 800. The authors note that since ELSA levels are based on the San Francisco Community College Center's curriculum, they may be inappropriate for student placement in other programs (Doherty & Ilyin, 1981). The authors state that in such cases "programs should establish their own levels."

Reported test reliability coefficients are high. Validity was also established through empirical studies. The ELSA was originally developed as a substitute for a lengthy battery of tests to provide a measurement of global English language proficiency. To validate the ELSA for this purpose, test scores were correlated with other measures including the Comprehensive Language Test for Speakers of English as a Second Language (CELT) (Harris & Palmer, 1970), the Listening Comprehension Test (LCPT) (Ilyin, 1981), the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) (University of Michigan 1962-1964),

Structures Tests-English Language (STEL) (Best & Ilyin, 1976), and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (ETS, version not specified). High correlations ranging from .73 to .84 with all but the listening tests (LCPT and CELT listening) were found. Since these results did not support use of the ELSA as an overall measure of language proficiency, the test authors indicate that the test would best be used to assess reading and grammar and that it would be necessary to use separate measures to assess other skill areas.

4. English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA)

The ESLOA, available through the Literacy Volunteers of America (1978), is designed to measure English oral communicative and aural comprehension skills of students from non-English language backgrounds. The test is designed to assess four levels of ESL proficiency. Level 1 requires no verbal response; students are asked only to point to the correct picture. Level II is designed to assess survival vocabulary; Level III to measure an individual's ability to answer information questions, and Level IV to assess a person's ability to accurately use English forms.

Ceiling and floor proficiency levels are established for each level. No other information regarding score interpretation is provided. Other technical data were also not available.

5. Language Assessment Scales II (LAS II)

The LAS II (Duncan and De Avila, 1981) "is a convergent assessment measure" designed to assess the oral English language skills of students in grades 6 through 12+. The aim of the LAS II, published by the Linguametrics Group, is to provide "an overall picture of language proficiency based on a student's performance on four linguistic subsystems" (Duncan & De Avila, 1981). These subcomponents include phonemics (knowledge of phonemes, stress, rhythm and intonation), lexicon (comprehension of words), syntax (rules for comprehending and constructing meaningful utterances), and pragmatics (the appropriate use of language to obtain specific goals). The LAS II, which has two available forms, is individually administered.

The individual's knowledge of phonemics is measured in two ways, through a minimal pairs subtest and via a test which assesses an individual's ability to repeat specific English sounds. Knowledge of lexical items selected from the Thorndike-Lorge word list is assessed through the oral identification of pictured items. Understanding of English syntax is measured in two ways utilizing both an aural comprehension and an oral production measure. Aural comprehension is assessed via a discreet point approach where a student listens to a recorded sentence on a cassette and then is asked to select the one that best illustrates the sentence from among three pictures. The sentence items include a range of specific syntactical markers such as plurals, possessives, negatives, tense, number, active versus passive voice, comparative adjectives etc. To assess oral production, a story retelling procedure is used to elicit language samples. Based on the results, qualitative holistic ratings are made according to one of five levels, with level 1 representing minimal proficiency and level 5 an "articulate native speaker."

Raw scores for each subsection are converted into weighted scores, with greater weight placed on the story retelling task. The weighted score is then converted to a level where levels 1 through 2 represent a non-native speaker of the language, level 3 a limited speaker, and levels 4 to 5 a fluent speaker.

Evaluation of pragmatics is assessed through an optional observation section which includes a range of sociolinguistic tasks pertinent to success in the school environment. The observation is intended to be completed by a teacher or other adult who knows the student well (not the examiner). It is recommended that this optional measure be administered to students whose scores fall in the "grey area," i.e., within one standard error (2 points) of the cut off point for a particular proficiency level. In these cases, the additional information is expected to reduce misclassification errors. Extensive guidance for scoring and score interpretation is provided in the Scoring and Interpretation Manual for Language Assessment Scales (Duncan & De Avila, 1981). Exercises to establish inter-rater reliability are provided as are sample protocols at each level.

It should be noted that although the authors suggest that the LAS II is suitable for students in grades 6 through 12+, the content is most appropriate for students at the junior high school level, adequate for assessment of students at the senior high school level, and least relevant at the adult level.

LAS II technical information is well documented. Validity studies for LAS II were based on agreement between test results and the judgments of bilingual adults used to separate individuals who are monolingual English speaking from Spanish speakers. Although the technical data suggests that the test is reasonably reliable, with such broad levels of classification "many questions about validity for the five levels of the test go unanswered" (Groarty, in press).

6. Listening Comprehension Picture Test (LCPT)

The LCPT (Ilyin, 1981) is designed to measure listening comprehension of basic English structures of non-native speakers of English without requiring reading or writing skills. This multiple choice test, available through Newbury House Publishers, is group administered. It is designed as a placement measure for beginning and intermediate adult students of ESL, or to place low beginners in college intensive English programs. The authors note that the test is not suitable for "students with no educational experience" (Ilyin & Rubin, 1981). The LCPT utilizes interrogative questions to elicit responses from examinees who are asked to select from among five choices.

Although the LCPT is intended to be used as a placement measure, it is also described as a diagnostic instrument and as a measure of achievement to assess student progress in English language development. Its use as a diagnostic instrument is greatly restricted because of the limited number of grammatical structures that provide the basis for creating a student profile of strengths and weaknesses. Based on the data presented in the Technical Guide, the LCPT should also be used cautiously as a measure of achievement. Abdelal (in press) observes that

> mean gains of a group can only be loosely interpreted. The practice and memory effects can be large especially with beginning students, if suitable time has not elapsed between pre- and post test. Mean gains may only reflect greater familiarity with the test method and content (p.5).

Validity and reliability information is provided in the LCPT Technical Guide (Ilyin & Rubin, 1981). Validity data consist of correlations with other measures including the ELSA and STEL which were authored and co-authored, respectively by Ilyin. Pearson product correlations ranged from .48 to .66. Correlations with the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) and the English Language Institute (ELI)-Aural were r=.19 and r=.39, respectively. The author attributes the low correlations with these measures to the difficulty of the test for students enrolled in the 100-500 level course at the San Francisco Community College Center.

Content validity is justified by the statement that "instructors reported that the tests contained material that was taught in levels 100 to 400 and was appropriate for those levels" (Ilyin & Rubin, 1981). It should be noted that the LCPT was not found to discriminate in placing students into levels between 500-600. Evidence of validity is claimed by virtue of the differences in reported means for levels 100-400 on a developmental form of the test. Abdelal (in press) suggests that the evidence provided is, in fact, not very strong.

> The fact that the group means are different with four levels is not sufficient evidence that the test discriminates well at these levels. An average difference of one or two correctly answered items does not seem sufficient to assume that the test is discriminating well at these levels (p.4).

Test reliability is quite high, ranging from .81 to .98. However, Abdelal points out that several administrative procedures could affect reliability. These include flexibility in translating test instructions, timing between test questions, and timing between administering the last 8 items to students who score above 40%.

7. Structure Tests - English Language (STEL)

The STEL (Best and Ilyin, 1976) is designed to measure knowledge of syntactic structures and vocabulary in English. It is a group administered, multiple

choice test available at three difficulty levels with alternate forms. It is described as an instrument that can be used as a measure of achievement as well as a placement test.

Both reliability and validity information are available for the the STEL. Reliability coefficients range from .86 to .90. Parallel form reliability is also reported. Content validity was established by comparing the content of the ESL courses taught at a particular adult school in San Francisco. Predictive validity was also established using expert teacher judgment where ESL teachers predicted whether students would fall in the top 25, middle 50 or bottom 25 percent. Differences between the groups were in the expected direction and were statistically significant.

Technical information needed to interpret test results is not readily accessible in one document. The Table of Equivalence Scores based on the San Francisco Adult Programs are found in the STEL answer key which is part of the STEL package. An additional source of information is the publication, "Newbury Linguistic Grading Scale,"* which provides specific information about the required content to be mastered at each level.

It should be noted that the STEL reflects a structural linguistic perspective which focuses the assessment on only one aspect of language proficiency - ability to correctly identify English language structures. In general, the strengths of this measure include its ease of administration and its inexpensive multiple choice format.

*This publication is no longer in print.

8. Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)

The TABE, published by CTB/MC Graw-Hill (1967, 1976, 1986), is designed to measure reading, vocabulary, reading comprehension, language mechanics, language expression, spelling, mathematics computation, and mathematics concepts and application. It is intended to be used for adults with "limited education and from various educational backgrounds." The test is available at three levels E (easy), M (medium), and D (difficult). The E level test is intended for adults with severe educational limitations or for individuals from culturally disadvantaged backgrounds. Levels M and D are adapted from the elementary and junior high school levels of the California Achievement Test (CAT). The TABE, which has two alternate forms, can be group administered. If administered in its entirety, the test takes approximately 3-1/2 hours. Practice exercises as well as a locator test are available. The locator test is designed to determine the TABE level that should be administered to a particular individual.

Scores for individual test sections are based on the number of correct items. The total raw test score is based on the addition of the section scores. The total score is then plotted on a student profile sheet that indicates grade level achieved. Diagnostic analysis of individual section errors is also possible so that the test results can be used for curriculum planning.

No information is available about test reliability. Content validity is based on the fact that item selection is based on procedures established for the California Achievement Test (CAT).

The TABE may be used both as a screening measure and as a measure of achievement over time. As part of the screening process the results may be used to identify whether an individual is literate in English and familiar with basic arithmetic concepts. Used in this way, the TABE is considered to be an adequate screening instrument. It should be noted, however, that users are not confident of the measure as a means of assessing language growth for adults from non-English speaking backgrounds. It has been found that when individuals are retested they often demonstrate no growth and sometimes even score less well than they originally did even though their teachers' informal and formal assessments indicate that there has been substantial progress in their job-related English language proficiency.

B. PROJECT-DEVELOPED AND PUBLIC DOMAIN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INSTRUMENTS

The China Institute in America (CIA) utilizes project developed measures for intake, placement, and measurement of overall performance. Their measures include the Chinese Chefs' English Screening Test, the Oral Proficiency Placement Test, and a performance-based English test.

As part of the intake process, individuals are assessed on the Chinese Chefs English Screening Test. This measure was designed to distinguish the oral proficiency of individuals at the low end of the scale in ways not possible in commercially available tests. The test, which is group administered, has six sections. They include assessment of the following skills: letter recognition, ordering, word recognition, creation of antonyms, placement of phrases or nouns within a sentence, completion of correct verb forms within a sentence, ability to comprehend complex statements or questions, translation of the statements or questions into Chinese, and student responses based on questions of varying complexity.

The Oral Proficiency Placement Test, used as a pre/post measure, consists of the following questions:

1. Do you understand English?
2. What's your name?
3. Are you Japanese?
4. Where were you born?
5. When did you come to America?
6. Is Sweet and Sour Pork spicy?
7. Did you work yesterday?
8. What will you do tomorrow?
9. What Chinese food can you make?
10. What do you need to make Dong Ting Shrimp?

At the instructors' discretion, higher level questions can be added when it is felt that an individual has progressed sufficiently to respond to more difficult questions than those prescribed. Scoring is based on a four point scale ranging from "no response" to "acceptable."

A performance-based English test is administered during the 5th week of the program. The assessment requires that a student describe a recipe in English.

In sum, the instruments developed by CIA include screening, placement, and performance-based pre/post-evaluation measures.

The BEST project, at Oakton Community College, also utilizes project-developed language proficiency measures for both intake and project evaluation. As part of their screening procedures, applicants who make initial contact via telephone are rated on a six-point scale ranging from "very poor" to "excellent." When applicants formally apply to the program, they take the Language Proficiency Interview (LPI), a modified Foreign Service Institute (FSI) type measure as well as a project developed CLOZE test.

The LPI interview, which is a direct measure of speaking proficiency, is intended to assess comprehension and speaking ability. It is designed to "elicit natural, flowing conversation." Standardized FSI scoring procedures were modified so that the LPI is scored to place equal emphasis on fluency and grammar. The project director emphasized the importance of the test administrator's experience with the measures in validly scoring an individual's performance; it is felt that the administrator should be trained and that, if possible, the same person should administer the pre- and posttest.

The CLOZE test consists of two paragraphs from an air conditioning/refrigeration/heating textbook. The passage is presented so that every nth word is deleted for a total of 20 missing words. Students are instructed to complete the passage. Each response represents a score of 5 for a potential total score of 100.

The test results are used initially to compare applicant skills for screening purposes. Once an individual completes the program, the test is readministered as part of the overall project evaluation.

As a general rule, it has been found that individuals who score 20 or lower will have difficulty with the project curriculum. Individuals who score above 70 are guided to apply to other vocational education projects because experience has shown that such individuals may feel bored in a BVT project that has a strong emphasis on English language development.

One BVT project utilizes an observation scale -- the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM). The SOLOM, which is based on the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) oral proficiency interview, is in the public domain. The SOLOM was developed within the San Jose, California Unified School District to assess the oral English proficiency of elementary and secondary students. It is intended as a measure that provides information about an individual's ability to comprehend both formal, instructional language, as well as informal, conversational situations.

In contrast to the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) Oral Proficiency Interview which was designed to assess foreign language proficiency of adults in the foreign service, the SOLOM was designed for use within a classroom context. Thus, there are several notable differences between the SOLOM and the FSI. First, the SOLOM ratings are based on teacher observation of individual students' use of oral English across a variety of situations rather than on simulated situations where an individual is asked to perform independent of the context. Second, the components of language assessed were revised for the SOLOM to include pronunciation rather than accent. Finally, the verbal descriptions attached to each level of proficiency in a given area of the FSI Oral Interview were adapted for the specific purpose of evaluating elementary and secondary limited English proficient youth language proficiency rather than that of adults.

Used in the BVT project, the ratings of proficiency are applied to limited English proficienct adults. They are rated on a five point scale in the areas of oral comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. The rating level characterizations are general providing a description of a student's global proficiency rather than an analysis of an individual's grasp of discrete aspects of the language. A lower score indicates less English language proficiency. A score of 5 in any one area indicates native-like proficiency in English, equal to that of a native English speaking individual. A total SOLOM score is based on the sum of the rating in each category with a maximum possible score of 25.

Specific validity and reliability data do not accompany the measure. However Zehler (1986) reports on two studies which attest to the technical qualities of the SOLOM. Clark (1978) and Adams (1978) in studies using the FSI Oral Interview provide evidence that there are high levels of agreement among different individuals rating the same person.

The SOLOM is similar in format and approach to the LPI instrument used at Oakton Community College. Like the SOLOM, it is intended to be used by a teacher who has worked with an individual in a classroom context and who has had other interactions that involve language use.

C. SUMMARY

The preceding discussion presented a number of measures of English language proficiency which are available for use by BVT projects. The Basic English Skills Test (see Appendix B) is recommended as the primary instrument for measuring English language proficiency, and is required for the BVT Statistical Summary Report. However, individual projects may choose to use additional measures to meet their individual program needs. The technical data, advantages, and disadvantages of the various instruments presented in this paper can be used by project staff to begin the process of identifying these additional measures.

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